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FICKLE FORTUNE.

By the Author of "Maurice Durant," etc.

CHAPTER LXVI.

Sweet is revenge—especially to women.

Byron.

Thus the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges.

Shakespeare.

LEAVING Hugh Darrell hurrying to obey Rebecca's summons, and Reginald Dartmouth unmasked and plainly revealed in all his naked villany, we must take advantage of the novelist's wonderful carpet and transport ourselves to the Countess Vitzarelli.

"More terrible than all things terrible," says a poet, "is a woman scorned."

He might, had he known the beautiful and stately Lucille, have put "betrayed" in place of "scorned," and been as truthful.

She fancied herself betrayed, and by the person in whom she had placed her fullest trust—by her uncle, the white-haired Italian count.

No doubt of the truth of Reginald's statement, backed as it was by the forged despatch and draft, ever entered her mind.

Infamous and improbable as it seemed, she felt assured that the count had sold her to her enemies, had betrayed her as a sacrifice to and ratification of this dishonourable treaty, and with that assurance burning like vitriol in her proud bosom she was resolved to foil and punish him to the uttermost.

She would foil and punish him, though the means might be hard and unpalatable to herself. She did not shrink a hair's breadth, but the instant the count communicated to her his intention of returning to Rome she informed Reginald Dartmouth that she was ready to fulfil her promise and follow out his directions.

What they were we know already. She was to hold herself in perfect readiness to accompany him at a moment's notice, first to a priest, secondly to some foreign port, where they could wait and tide over the breaking of the storm.

Reginald Dartmouth was all prepared, had leisure

[BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.]

even on his hands, when the fatal discovery of the will was made and Mr. Reeves's summons reached him.

Now, striving by threats and bribes, alternated each hour, he was dashing back to London to keep his appointment with the woman for whom he had conceived a passion—we will not say loved—and fly the country whose justice would demand the squire's life and wealth at his hands.

Lucille was a woman, and, with all her present sternness of determination and bulwark of pride, a gentle one at heart.

She sat in her own boudoir, trembling and almost weeping, her portmanteau packed and lying beside her in a recess.

The hour was approaching when Reginald Dartmouth would come for her; there wanted but a day—one clear day—to-morrow would be the last of her freedom; before its sun had set she would be another's—no longer her own mistress, no longer free to indulge her old dreamy disposition, no longer able to fly to solitude as a solace and consolation.

No! to-morrow was the last of her liberty.

She sighed, but it was rather the sigh of desperation than sadness.

Now that it was so near she dreaded the step she was forced to take, forced by her uncle's treachery; on his head be the sin, the blame, and the consequences.

To-night, the last night beneath the count's roof and protection, she shrank from retiring to rest, a dim presentiment of coming ill kept her eyelids achingly awake, her heart throbbingly restless.

Her maid—one she could trust—sat sewing in an adjoining room.

The count was out, attending the meetings of the Secret Society.

She was to have been there with him, but she feared to leave the house lest Reginald Dartmouth should have some last message or direction and she be not there to receive it.

Sitting alone, and filled with morbid apprehension, she almost wished she had accompanied the count,

and with a sudden impulse rose to order her carriage, intending to follow him, but as her hand touched the jewelled bell a slight tap at the door stopped her, and she sank into the chair again, saying:

"Come in."

Madame Campani entered, serene and placid as usual.

"Your ladyship not at rest yet?" she said, with surprise. "I understood that you intended retiring early."

"Did I say so?" said Lucille, with a weary but kind smile. "Well, it was but to get rid of thee, madame. What now?"

Madame Campani hesitated.

"Had I guessed you were still unretired I would not have knocked," she said. "A man, a servant of Captain Dartmouth's, is waiting in the lobby. He is anxious to see you. He is the bearer of some message to your ladyship, I imagine, though he will not communicate its purport or say aught but that an interview is imperative."

The countess, with an impatient "Tut, tut," at her chaperone's precise and formal tone, said, almost eagerly:

"From Captain Dartmouth, madame! I will see him."

"But," ventured the ceremonious old lady, "the hour is late."

"But me no buts, my good madame," interrupted Lucille, with the air of an empress. "I will see him."

Madame Campani withdrew, and after the lapse of a few minutes the door opened again and admitted a thin, cadaverous figure, with a white face and a pair of snakish eyes.

Lucille raised her eyebrows with an air of displeased astonishment.

"I understood," she said, with cold haughtiness, "that Captain Dartmouth's servant wished to see me. You—"

"Were Captain Dartmouth's servant," interrupted Mr. Vignes, with a gesture of profound humility and respect.

"What is your business with me at this unreasonable hour?" asked Lucille, as if scorning to bandy words with him.

"Most important business, my lady," replied the man, in his sleek whisper. "Most important or I would not have dared to ask for an interview."

Lucille inclined her head impatiently, and sank upon a fauteuil.

"I will hear it, sir," she said, "that is if you are brief and the matter concerns me."

"It concerns your ladyship most nearly," replied Vignes, watching her from under his half-closed eyes as a cat does a mouse—"most nearly, or this notice is meaningless."

And he held up one of the bills which had been printed, offering a reward for the recovery of the locket.

"Ah," exclaimed the countess, her whole manner changing in an instant. "You have found my locket?"

"I have, my lady," he whispered behind his hand. "Give it me," she cried, with a profound sigh. "You shall have more than the stipulated reward if it is unrecovered."

"It is unrecovered," he replied, with a glint of hidden sarcasm in his viperish eyes.

And taking a small packet from his pocket he held it out with a profound bow.

The countess almost snatched it, and removing the wrapper, clasped the trinket to her breast.

"Where, where did you find it?" she asked, her face flushed with delight.

"On the terrace of the Saw Hall, my lady," he replied.

And a certain expression of his small eyes told her that he had been an unseen listener to her confession.

"On—the terrace," she repeated, slowly, growing paler at each word, "then, sir, you heard—"

"All, my lady," interrupted the man, with quiet composure.

The countess sprang to her feet, but sank down again, her eyes bent upon the ground, her lips writhing with mortification.

"I heard all, my lady, and so I doubt not did another—for there were two unseen spies that night—myself and Captain Dartmouth's other servant—it would be impossible to describe the venomous tone with which he whispered the ignominious words—the other servant, John Standfield."

"Two!" breathed the countess, with a look of alarm.

"Ay, two, my lady," replied Vignes. "He not only listened but played the thief. He it was who first picked up or purloined that locket. I found it where in his hurry to escape he let it fall at the bottom of the steps."

The countess remained silent, but her flashing eyes and tightly closed lips told of the storm within.

"Well, sir," she said, "you are vile enough to confess unblushingly your infamy, what other purpose save that of claiming the reward—which is here on the table before you—have you still in waiting?"

"I did not confess without a reason, my lady," retorted Vignes, without a shadow of resentment at her scornful and contemptuous looks and words. "I listened hoping that I might be of service to you; I now confess that by doing so I have been of service to you."

"You!" she said, with simple wonder.

"Ay, I, my lady," he echoed. "I am an humble individual, an humble worm, my lady, but I have been of service to you."

"How?" she demanded, convinced that this smooth-tongued villain was attempting to extort a farther sum from her by playing on her supposed credulity.

"By discovering the person who"—a look full of passionate fire stopped him in time—"whom you requested Mr. Dartmouth to find," he said.

She looked at him with a piercing glance, but his white, pallid countenance, more like a mask than a face, baffled her.

"Go on," she said.

"I guessed from your ladyship's manner how eager you were to discover this person and I knew that you would not be contented with a reward to the man who made the discovery. So, my lady, I went to work—you see I had the clue which Captain Dartmouth could not trace."

And he looked with a significant glance at the locket clasped in the countess's hand.

She inclined her head with the mechanical gesture of an automaton.

"Go on," she said, sternly.

"I went to work, my lady, and traced the young lady, whose portrait is in that locket, to her death."

The countess turned still whiter, till her face looked like marble and her lips stonelike and carved.

After waiting a moment and taking a glance at her Vignes continued:

"You will be prepared to hear some painful details: my lady—some very painful details?"

She gasped as if for breath and, stretching forth her hand, reached a small vinaigrette, with which she ward off the numbed feeling of faintness that threatened to overcome her.

"Go on," she said, in a voice almost inaudible, "I am prepared."

Vignes unbuckled his coat, which fitted his attenuated frame so closely that his ribs were plainly denoted, and took from his pocket a small packet of letters.

These he held in his hand, and, tapping them with his long, lank forefinger resumed, in the same husky whisper:

"My lady, I came to-night prepared for a refusal and some obloquy. I imagined that your ladyship would refuse to see me or perhaps go still farther and have me maltreated—as Captain Dartmouth maltreated me!" he added, with a venomous hiss. "That being my impression, I determined on a course of action to gain my purpose. I intended sending one of these letters up to your ladyship with the intimation that the remainder of the series with the story relating to them were in my possession. Your ladyship was kind—and wise—enough to grant me the interview without forcing me to such a device. I am grateful, truly grateful. It has spared your ladyship the shock of a sudden surprise and me some trouble."

As if charmed and horribly bewildered by the intense regard of his viperish eyes, Lucille sat listening speechlessly, almost breathlessly.

After a pause he went on:

"On finding the locket, my lady, I commenced my search. It would be tedious and to no purpose to enter into the particulars of my system of following the clue. I followed it and to some purpose. I was then in the service of Captain Dartmouth. Some business of his favoured my visit to Paris. I commenced my search there and discovered that the young lady—my lady's sister—was enticed from her charge by a gentleman, as my lady stated. That gentleman was an Englishman. I learnt his name. I followed up the fresh clue which that information gave me and tracked—yes, my lady, that's the word, tracked him across the Channel, home! here to England! He came with the young lady he had betrayed and, using his influence, placed her upon the stage. She became a dancer, my lady, a ballet dancer—I regret your ladyship's evident pain, but, as I forewarned you, the details are unpleasant. She became a ballet dancer and gained considerable notoriety. The gentleman had bestowed upon her an English name, a handsome house, carriages and servants, all that his wealth and her earnings could purchase, but he never married her. My lady, I come to the unpleasant part of my story. Your sister earned many laurels and much fame, but she lost her betrayer's affection. He deserted her. Yes, my lady, deserted her. Richer and possibly fairer game enticed him, and one morning the papers were eloquent with an account of her desertion and subsequent suicide by poison. She died by her own hand, for love of the gentleman who had enticed her from abroad and then deserted her."

He paused; the dry, emotionless tones of his husky voice seemed burning into the heart of the listener. She seemed powerless to move, her eyes dilated with horror and almost unbearable anguish, her lips burned as if a seething iron had pressed them.

The viperish eyes watched the effect of his words for a few moments, then, still in the same tone, he continued:

"This is the bare outline of the story, my lady; for the details I refer you to these letters. You will find in them the name of my lady's sister and the name of her destroyer."

And with a noiseless step he glided to the table and laid the packet upon it.

The countess with a shudder and a gasp for breath seized the packet and examined the top letter.

As she did so the room seemed to swim round her, her heart almost ceased to beat, and with a gesture of despair she sprang to her feet, letting the letter flutter to the ground at her feet from her outstretched, nerveless hand.

"My lady is surprised," said Vignes, with a malicious sneer, as he stooped to recover the letter.

"Your proofs—your proofs!" breathed rather than spoke the countess.

"Those," replied the man, pointing to the letters, "and this," taking from his pocket as he spoke a small miniature and handing it to the countess.

"My lady will remember to have seen that on Captain Dartmouth's watch-chain a thousand times. It opens with a spring—allow me. Ah, it is open."

The countess looked one long, scrutinizing look at the portrait within it, and then sank upon the fauteuil, her arm falling inert and useless at her side.

There was a pause of some minutes, during which the beautiful woman lay as one stricken motionless and senseless, and the man-reptile stood regarding her with unmoved face and merciless eyes, which sometimes raised themselves and wandered with an envious look round the luxurious apartment.

The minutes passed and Lucille raised her head. Vignes saw with the quickness of his snake species that a change had taken place.

The stony look had given place to one of passionate and dogged determination, the compressed lip had relaxed into a merciless expression of hunger for revenge, the eyes had lost their wild, terror-stricken look and gained a hard, penetrating glance, before which the spy shrank abashed.

There was still a silence for a moment, then Lucille broke it.

"How came you by this locket?" she asked, in low but metallic clear tones.

"I—I—"

"Stole it?" she interrupted, without a word of scorn or disdain. "You took it from—from his person?"

He nodded.

"These letters you stole likewise?"

"Yes," he said. "And still something more, my lady."

She held out her hand without a look of surprise.

"Give it me," she said.

He took from his pocket a folded paper and placed it on the table to which her finger pointed, as if she feared the contamination of his touch.

She took the paper and opened it. At first she did not recognize its import, but after a moment of casual she looked up with a glance of almost sublime triumph.

"Ah, traitor as well as fiend! Your fate is sealed." At these words the silent onlooker uttered a half-hiss of exultation, and Lucille swung round upon him.

"How has he injured you, for nature alone cannot have created so base a man?"

Vignes smiled with calm impassibility.

"My lady," he said, huskily, "he struck me."

She regarded him for a moment with a look that went far beyond him, then, as if with an effort, recalled her wandering attention, and, pointing to the heap of gold, said, sternly:

"Go." The man glided to the table, took up the money and without a word left the room as noiselessly as he had entered.

The countess took up the letters and the miniature and concealed them in her bosom, then, with the folded paper in her hand consulted her jewelled watch.

"Midnight," she murmured, in the same, suppressed and metallic tones. "Before the next midnight, my sister, thou shalt be revenged!"

CHAPTER LXVII.

Oh, if there be an Elysium on earth

It is this, it is this!

Scott.

HUGH strode along with Sir Charles by his side, and Mr. Reeves hurried after them, as if for dear life.

Hugh had become so injured to and prepared for strange events and extraordinary excitements that he understood this sudden summons as indicating nothing less than, perhaps, a fire at the Warren, or the sudden demise of its fair owner.

In his anxiety to reach the old place he almost forgot the disappointment, he was labouring under in regard to Cecil, and with that look of suppressed energy and power upon his face, he hurried himself into a determination of showing no surprise let the event, accident or intelligence be what it might.

Sir Charles did not feel inclined to break in upon his companion's reverie, so the two hurried on and at last reached the Warren.

Here they saw that lights were flashing and disappearing at the windows at fitful alternations; they were met by Mrs. Lucas, who, in a burst of affectionate excitement and emotion, embraced the stalwart Hugh and begged him for Heaven's sake to go into the drawing-room.

Hugh, who took the old lady's embraces, and indeed returned them with a graceful earnestness, did as he was bid, and walked towards the drawing-room.

Sir Charles hung back, not caring to intrude on a matter that seemed, from appearances, to concern Hugh only, but Hugh caught him by the arm.

"Come, come," he said, "no desertion, Sir Charles; you are too good a friend to let slip in a chance of need."

And the two entered the room together.

A glance assured Hugh that one of his surmises was groundless, for, in the middle of the room, stood Rebecca, anything but deceased, and far from seriously ill.

Indeed she seemed particularly well, for her cheeks were flushed with a blush of happiness that

had long been a stranger to them, and her soft, kind eyes were bright with a joyful and somewhat excited light.

It was evident that she endeavoured to hide these outward signs of an inward satisfaction, but in vain, for Hugh's quick eye noticed them at once, and with rather a puzzled look crossed the room and said:

"Well, Rebecca, what's the matter? Thank Heaven it is nothing amiss; I am that by your face. I feared when your lad gave you message that you were ill, or that this night's tale of villainy had received a supplement."

"No, no, no, nothing has happened," said Rebecca, fidgeting about the table, and trying to look calm and collected. "At least, nothing terrible or painful. Won't you sit down—both of you? I—I—want to ask you a question, Mr. Darrell?"

"All right," said Hugh, with his grave smile. "But first let me ask you one. Why am I to be 'Mr. Darrell,' instead of 'Hugh' as of old? Do you mean to rebuke me for calling you Rebecca?"

Rebecca crimsoned and glanced shyly at Sir Charles, who nodded with extreme satisfaction.

"Well, Hugh," she said, "Hugh as of old. Now for my question. You said that—that you had come down to the Dale post-haste to meet a certain person who had made an appointment with you."

"I did," said Hugh, with a sudden sadness, fixing his large eyes inquiringly upon the face of Rebecca. "Will you tell me who it was?" she asked, picking up a book from the table and putting it down again, moving a little way towards him, and then sinking into a chair, as if she scarcely knew how to contain herself.

Hugh thought a moment.

"Well," he said, "there are few things I would refuse you, Rebecca, especially within two hours of our meeting, but I don't think I can tell you the person's name. It's a secret, at least I fancy he would consider it as such."

"Ha!" exclaimed Sir Charles, whose handsome face would have made a good study for an artist wishing to represent Bewilderment.

"Ha! Why, wasn't it a woman?"

"No," replied Hugh, almost sharply. "What have I to do with women? No, this person is a lad. There, I don't see, after all, so much occasion for secrecy. I came to meet a lad, a very dear friend of mine, who shared some of the adventures of which you will sustain a recital presently. We were great friends, and were parted much against our will on the shores of Africa. That was a long time ago. I have never seen him since—never heard of him even until a few hours back, when I received a short note bidding me come post-haste here to meet him."

Sir Charles stroked his moustache, and looked more bewildered still.

"By Jove!" he exclaimed, "this is getting beyond me. I don't see my way out of all this at all. Shores of Africa! Whew! I give it up."

Hugh smiled rather sadly.

"So do I at present," he said. "Life's a riddle that few men are able to solve—mine has been so especially. I am not quite assured in my own mind that I am not asleep, and dreaming all I have heard and seen this night. But come, Rebecca, let us have the key to this enigma. What is the matter? What has happened? What about my appointment and my friend?"

Rebecca, who had listened with ill-concealed impatience, now rose and walked towards a screen that stood at the farther end of the room.

Hugh and Sir Charles followed her with their eyes and remained silent.

With her hand upon the screen she said, looking at Hugh:

"Now be prepared for a surprise!"

Then, with the air of a conjuror introducing his cleverest trick, she led forth a young lady, very beautiful and dark, attired in a well-fitting though muddy-battered riding-habit.

The two gentlemen, quite unprepared for this attack, rose and bowed.

The young lady, with downcast eyes and manner that was half abashed but wholly graceful and prepossessing, advanced, holding Rebecca's hand in her left and gathering up her habit in the right.

When she came within the full light of the large candelabra Hugh uttered an exclamation and sprang forward; but, with a quick and puzzled glance at her feminine garments and still more ladylike appearance and bearing, stopped short and stood staring, dumbfounded.

Rebecca, over whose face a thousand and one emotions were fleet like summer clouds across the moon, here broke into a delightful ripple of laughter, and then, with a mock gravity that still farther overwhelmed poor Hugh, said:

"Grace, allow me to introduce to you your cousin, Mr. Hugh Darrell. Mr. Darrell, this lady is Miss Grace Darrell, my dearest friend and your cousin."

The young lady lifted a pair of beautiful dark eyes and fixed them upon him with a gaze that was at once imploring and tender.

Hugh bowed and stared.

Suddenly his face paled and he strode forward.

"What does this masquerade mean?" he exclaimed, sternly, turning to Rebecca with his old frown. "This is my cousin, a Miss Darrell, you tell me, but I know her manner likewise tells me that she—or he—is some one else."

He got so confused that Rebecca gave way to another ripple of laughter, and then, with a sly, triumphant glance at the pale-faced young lady, whose eyes were not raised from the carpet to receive it, took Sir Charles by the arm and, saying, "There, we will leave you and your cousin, Mr. Darrell, to explain matters," led the astonished and utterly confused baronet from the room.

Miss Grace Darrell seemed very much inclined to follow her dearest friend; but her movement of escape was rendered futile by the sudden closing of the door and by Hugh's seizing her arm and keeping her within the room.

With an almost fierce firmness he drew her to the full glare of the candelabras and fixed a scrutinizing gaze upon her face, which she had now covered with her two small hands, that looked white and ivorylike against her blushes.

"Cecil!" he exclaimed, suddenly, "Cecil!"

At the old familiar name not heard for so long the poor girl was completely overcome.

With a sharp cry she fell at his feet, and, still keeping her face hid, sobbed:

"Oh, forgive me! forgive me!"

"Forgive you," he cried, all his anger, if anger it had been, gone in a second. "Forgive you, lad, Ay a thousand times worse piece of folly than this. Come, come, my dear Cecil. Come, tell me you are glad to see me, and explain all—this."

And as the 'lad' showed no signs of obeying him he started to raise her.

The moment he did so the truth broke out upon him with the suddenness of a flash of lightning.

She knew by his exclamation and his step backwards that the veil had dropped from him, and with another cry she raised her face with an imploring look that was piteous in its intensity, and, catching his strong hand in both hers, cried, brokenly:

"Oh, don't turn from—oh, forgive me! You don't know all. Indeed—indeed I wouldn't have done it if I hadn't been driven to it. I know what you think, I see it in your face. You are ashamed of me, you cannot respect a woman who could do what I have done. But—but you don't know all—you don't know what I have suffered. I have toiled and toiled for—for your sake. Oh, Laury, don't think worse of me than I am. I'm not wicked—not so wicked as you think. Only foolish, Laury—only foolish. And I was driven to it. Oh! oh! oh!"

And the strong-minded, brave-hearted, dare-all Grace, who had gone through a maze of difficulties and troubles that many men would have shrunk from or died under, melted into tears and clung with her two tiny hands to the strong, clenched one above her as a drowning man clings to the rock which alone can save him.

And Hugh?

He stood listening to the passionate heart-pouring with ears that only half heard.

He knew nothing of the strange events which were to be unfolded for him; he knew nothing, comprehended nothing save this one thing, that the feeling he had entertained for the pretty, pleasing and gentle-souled lad on the African shore had been an angel unaware—the angel Love.

He knew, for his heart grasped it at once, and sent the hot blood racing through his veins at the knowledge that this Cecil here was a woman, beautiful with a delicious, overpowering, love-provoking beauty, with a bewitching tenderness, a tenderness called into life for him.

He looked down at her, revelling in the discovery of his love and her loveliness, looked down till her confession, her prayer for pardon had finished, then knelt down and caught her to his breast, pressed her there till he felt her fluttering heart throbbing against his, and, still holding her, breathed, in the accents of a strong man's first pure love:

"Cecil! Grace! my darling!"

There was no need to ask her if she loved him, to tell her that he loved her.

One and all the scenes they had figured in flitted before his mind's eye. A thousand little infinitesimal nothings in glances, words and blushes, then enigmas and mysteries only, were revealed now, and within his heart he knew, as if the angel of Truth had dipped his pen in Light and written it there, that he had loved this beautiful girl and she had loved him from the first moment of their meeting in the land beyond the sea.

Hugh was strong, strong as a giant; and he might

have crushed the life out of the little graceful body against his iron breast—and Grace would have been quite content, no doubt, to have been so crushed—had not a long-drawn sigh warned him in time. Loosening his grasp a little, he drew her to the couch, and there, seated side by side, hand in hand, they exchanged their first kiss.

In reality half an hour had elapsed before Rebecca tapped at the door and disturbed them in their Eden, but the moments had flown on the wings of a dove for the two lovers who had so much to tell and so much to learn.

Hugh, with all a man's despotism, insisted upon hearing Grace's adventures first, and she, with additional blushes and many pauses and hesitations, told him everything—reserving one thing, the supposed foul play in regard to the squire's death.

That topic Rebecca had warned her to shun, at least for the present, so Hugh, with all the magnanimity of a brave heart, felt rather inclined to pity Reginald Dartmouth than otherwise, and actually urged one or two excuses for him—excuses to which Grace listened gravely, for she knew that when the whole story was told his noble clemency would be turned to a bitter and merciless thirst for vengeance.

But she put the dark thought from her for the present, and, after giving him a hurried outline of her life since they were parted, nestled closer against his broad breast, and looking up into his love-lit eyes murmured:

"And that's all, Hugh! It seemed a great deal to do and bear, but now, lying here, with your arms round me and your love shining down on me like a sun, it shrinks into nothingness. Oh, Hugh, what am I that I should be so happy?"

"A brave, beautiful woman—my true-hearted darling!" he breathed, passionately.

She put up her little hand and laid it on his lips.

"I like to hear you say that—oh, so much, dear—but I mustn't, you will make me vain and wicked. Hugh, now you are to tell me your adventures and troubles. I know some already, and so does all the world by this time, poor, noble-hearted Hugh! 'Hero of the Slavonia' they called you, Hugh, I read it myself, read it and dreamed of it, repeated it in my prayers, whispered it all day and all night. 'Hero of the Slavonia'! My hero, for though I didn't think you would ever love me, Hugh, I knew that you were mine, my heart's own, though I never saw you again. Can you believe me when I expected you to scorn me for what I had done—spurn me from you with some hard and bitter words—call me unwomanly, immodest—"

It was now his turn to stop her.

"Hush, my own," he said, his face a bright crimson. "You could not think me so base, so vile. Grace, in some future day the world will get hold of your story and lift its hat to you and bow its knees to a real heroine. My darling, when I think of all you have undergone, all you have done and borne for me, my heart seems overflooded with love and gratitude. What are my poor, trivial exploits compared with yours?"

"Nothing!" she said, archly. "But let me hear them, Hugh."

Then he told her how he had been cut down by the press gang, been nigh to death, yet recovered, then gone back to the station and found it a heap of ruins, with no living soul near it to tell the story of its demolition or the whereabouts of the settler Stewart.

He told her how, ever mourning and longing for her—though he could not understand exactly why—(she blushed a deeper crimson than ever here, and completely hid her face against his friendly breast)—he had worked at the port until, utterly unable to overcome his longing to see her again, he had taken a work-out passage on the "Slavonia."

With much adroitness he passed over his privations on board and his noble and generous self-sacrifice, and went on to describe his strange bondage at the docks.

Here she laughed with arch merriment.

"Oh, how capital! I managed it," she cried, clasping her hands together (which he immediately took possession of and kissed). "Who would have thought I could have caught and kept my brave fellow for three weeks—fast and tight as a bird in a cage!"

"Capital, indeed!" he echoed, with his now happy smile. "Never guessed that you had a hand in it. The fellows at the dock played their part so well that it never occurred to me to doubt them for an instant. If I had only known that my dear, sweet Cecil—I beg pardon, I mean Grace—was hovering over and about me like the angel she is, I should have been—"

"Wicked and naughty, restless and disobedient. Ah, I knew, I knew my man!" she interrupted. "I knew with whom I had to deal. You would have been interfering and spoiling all our plans—dear, good Rebecca's and all."

"Ay," he said, "most like. I am only a plain, simple stupid, not a clever lad—lady I mean," he corrected, with a slytwinkle of the eye, that brought up the blush again, "like Miss Grace Darrell."

"And Rebecca—is it not delightful?"

"What?" asked Hugh, with all the deuseness of his sex.

"What!" repeated the beautiful girl, "why, do you not see, you stupid boy? Cannot you see that Rebecca will have her reward—if you can by a stretch of courtesy call it so? Sir Charles—"

"Oh!" said Hugh, with a look of intense satisfaction, "of course, I see! How splendid! The very thing! Well, he's a good fellow, I can see by his face, and Rebecca's all that is good and enviable."

"Dear, sweet-hearted Rebecca," echoed Grace, the tears springing to her eyes. "Oh, Hugh, if you only knew how good she is."

At that moment Rebecca entered, and, as is usual in such cases, the two happy individuals sprang to the far ends of the couch, and tried to look as if they had been sitting as far apart all the while.

Rebecca's face had a shadow upon it hidden behind the smile, and Grace was recalled to the consciousness of external matters in a moment.

Rebecca held out a hand to each, but said nothing, and while Grace, scolding such cold greeting, clung round her neck, Hugh took her hand and pressed it affectionately and gratefully.

Rebecca managed at this moment to whisper a word in Grace's ear, and that quick young lady stole out.

Before she got beyond the door, however, two constables entered the room following a man servant, and one, the inspector, walking up to Hugh, asked for his attention on a matter of moment.

"Yes," said Hugh, "speak out; what is it?"

The man opened his lips, but before he could speak Mr. Reeves hurried in.

"Stop a moment, Mr. Inspector," he said. "Don't worry Mr. Darrell about this matter. I sent for you, and will give you directions. Step this way."

And much to Grace's and Rebecca's relief he left the room, followed by the constables.

But Hugh, who had got an inkling that they were endeavouring to conceal something from him, gently pushed Rebecca aside, and followed after.

Mr. Reeves saw by his face that it would be useless to attempt farther concealment, and in a faltering tone he communicated all the details of the poor squire's death.

For a moment Hugh stood motionless and silent. Then his face turned white, and his eyes hardened and grew fierce as they had done in the old African days when some wild animal stood in his path.

He turned to Mrs. Lucas and the old doctor and gathered confirmation from their faces.

Then, in hard, unnaturally cold tones, he said:

"You have the warrant?"

"Yes, sir," said the inspector, tapping his breast pocket.

"Good. We will be on the road at once. He has the start, but it shall not avail him. I offer a reward of a thousand pounds to the man who catches him."

His stern words seemed to galvanize the two men.

They made a dash at the door, shouting for their horses and giving hurried orders and directions as they ran.

Hugh, with no less haste but greater coolness, caught up his hat, and telling Mr. Reeves to acquaint the ladies of the pursuit, strode round to the stables, where the inspector had informed him several horses were ready saddled.

Dr. Todley, in dismay at the mere idea of such exertions on the part of a late invalid, ran down to the door to beg of him to remain, but Hugh, silent and stern, would only wait long enough to give Grace a farewell embrace and swallow a glass of wine, and dashed on towards London with the speed and untiring energy of an avenging Nemesis.

(To be continued.)

THE CHEQUE BANK.—A cheque bank on a new system will soon commence operations. Any person depositing, say, 50*l.*, in it, or any bank in connection with it, will receive a book containing ten forms of cheque, which he can fill up for any sum not exceeding 5*l.* each, or fifty cheques, upon each of which any sum not exceeding 1*l.* can be drawn—these amounts being so printed upon the cheques that they cannot be altered. The cheque will thus be at the responsibility of the bank and not of the drawer, and will be accepted in payment of accounts, and by other bankers, in the same manner as they would accept notes or specie. This system is considered calculated to effect great economy in the use of coin and notes, and to be of much advantage to small traders and

others unable to keep large accounts, and who have been discouraged from banking by the unwillingness of ordinary bankers to open petty accounts. This cheque bank further will confine itself altogether to this business, neither discounting bills nor making advances, but allying itself to, instead of entering into rivalry with, existing banks.

DIAMONDS IN SANDS.—Attention has been called, by Professor B. Silliman, to the probable occurrence of small diamonds in the sands left in the sluices of hydraulic washings in California. A microscopic examination of a sample of these sands, from Cherokee, in Butte County, revealed the existence of numerous crystals of hayacinth or zircon, associated with crystals of topaz, fragments of quartz, black grains of chromite and titanite iron-ore, and a few small masses of a highly refracting substance, which from its physical and chemical characters is believed to be true diamond. The occurrence of diamonds in California has long been known, although not under these circumstances.

THE ROSE AND THE FAIRY.

A TINY Fairy—of the sort
Who love in flowery fields to sport,
One dewy eye espied a Rose
So fair and fragrant, straight he goes
And nestles in her bosom; dips
Deep in her leaves his elfin lips,
And sucks the virgin honey thence;
Regaling thus his dainty sense
Of taste and odour rare, until
The Sybarite has drunk his fill!
"Sweet blossom!" sighed the grateful Fay,
"Thy bounty I would fain repay.
The fairest flowers that deck the field
Or garden, all to thee must yield
In loveliness; but that the Queen
Among her subjects may be seen
E'en in the dark and envious night
(That hides thy beauty from the sight)
This little Lantern shall be thine
To show, at night, thy form divine!"
With modest thanks the Rose receives
The Glow-worm's light upon her leaves,
Then turns to list a thrilling lay
That witcheth her maiden heart away!
For Philomela filled the grove,
Just then, with such a song of love
For "Rosa, fairest of the fair,"
The maid was won, ere half aware
The singer, while he bent to bless
The trembler with a soft caress,
Had snatched her lamp—the rogue! and
gone
And left her in the dark—alone!

L'ENVOI.

The Glow-worm lantern (we are told
By wise expositors) is gold;
Which serves to set in fairest light
The charms that else were lost to sight;
Moreover, it is plain to see
The cunning Nightingale is he,
The smooth-tongued knave, whose wicked
art
For lucre cheats the loving heart,
That, like poor Rose, is doomed to prove
How craft may feign the voice of Love!

J. G. S.

SCIENCE.

PRODUCTION OF GOLD IN FINLAND.—During last autumn there were no less than seventeen companies engaged in extracting gold from the auriferous sand of Finland. The alluvial deposits at Toalo are said to be extremely rich in gold, the total production last season being estimated at from 50,000 to 60,000 grammes, representing a total value of 60,000 roubles (9,500*l.*) One of these companies returned a dividend of 70 per cent.; the largest nugget yet found weighed forty grammes.

CEMENT FOR FIXING GLASS TO METAL.—A cement of great adhesive property, particularly serviceable in attaching the brass mountings on glass lamps, as it is unaffected by petroleum, may be prepared by boiling three parts of rosin with one part of caustic soda, and five parts of water, thus making a kind of soap which is mixed with one-half of its weight of plaster of Paris. Zinc white, white lead, or precipitated chalk, may be used instead of the plaster, but when they are used the cement will be longer in hardening.

AN EXPERIMENT WITH PHOSPHATE OF LIME.—If a small quantity of phosphate of soda is added to a dilute solution of chloride of calcium, a white precipitate is formed which dissolves on stirring. The addition of more phosphate of soda forms a permanent precipitate; if now a current of carbonic acid gas be passed into the liquid in which the precipitate is suspended, the precipitate dis-

solves again, in the same way as carbonate of lime does in water containing excess of carbonic acid. The addition of a fresh quantity of phosphate of soda produces a fresh precipitate, which can be again dissolved by carbonic acid. There is, however, a limit to the operation, for having repeated it a few times crystals form which do not dissolve, and which may be caught on a filter and washed. They consist of the bibasic phosphate of lime with four molecules of water of crystallization. If these crystals be put in water freed from carbonic acid, by boiling, and frequently shaken for 24 hours, a salt is formed which contains three equivalents of phosphoric acid to four of carbonic acid, a salt richer in phosphoric acid than the bibasic salt with which we started, yet not so rich as amonibasic salt.

GUTTA PERCHA.—The "pure white gutta percha" commonly sold may be designated "pure white oxide of zinc," being made up with this substance in very large proportions. A good sample of raw or crude gutta percha should yield at least 75 per cent. of the pure resin. The method of preparing the white "gutta" is as follows:—The gutta being first torn into fragments by machinery, is digested with chloroform for a few days, and then filtered; to the filtered solution a sufficient quantity of spirits of wine is added to precipitate the "gutta," which separates from its solvent as a white bulky mass. This is afterwards dried by exposure to the air. For dental purposes it requires to be boiled and rolled into sticks whilst hot and plastic.

BALLOON STEERING APPARATUS.—One of the smallest and in some respects most curious of the many scientific societies in London is the Aeronautical Society, presided over by Mr. James Glaisher, F.R.S. At the meeting of this society two rather important steps of progress were reported. One is that by M. Dupuy de Lome, who sends information that by means of a screw worked by eight men in a balloon weighing altogether four tons he has been able to cause the balloon to deviate twelve degrees either way from the direction in which the wind was blowing. This, as the chairman remarked, would enable us to send balloons into Paris as well as to get them out. A step in the direction of motive power, combining strength with lightness, was exhibited in a small machine occupying less than a square yard, in which steam was got up by the use of gas in less than two minutes to a pressure of 100 lb. on the square inch. The machine weighs only 40 lb., and is of 4-horse power. On the same principle it was averred that another could be made of 100-horse power that will weigh within 700 lb. One is ordered for a balloon that has been constructed for the Aeronautical Society of Vienna at a cost of 1,200*l.*

LIGHTNING CONDUCTORS.—Every chimney-stack should be provided with an upright rod of iron rising 3 ft. above the chimney, and drawn to a tapering point, which should be tinned or galvanized. These rods should be strong, say $\frac{1}{2}$ in., but may be continued with galvanized wire, such as is used for the telegraphs; these should be soldered to the ridge-cap, if of metal, and then led down the roof or the gables to the guttering and soldered to that. Similar wire should be soldered to the lower part of the down water-pipe and go to the bottom of the tank, terminating in a plate of iron. But this earth connection should not be trusted to. The wires from the chimneys should be continued to the ground also, and carried down into the strata where most moisture is present, ending in a plate of iron or a bag of coke; and it will be all the better if these wires are led in this manner down each corner of the house, so as to distribute the ground-connection and diminish the tension at any one part of the building. It should be remembered that the true object of the conductor is not, as commonly supposed, to receive the lightning-stroke and carry it harmlessly away, but by means of the elevated points so to reduce the tension of the spot, that only upon very rare occasions will a lightning-stroke occur there at all. The silent or brush discharge is substituted for the disruptive or spark discharge.

If there is one place more unlikely than any other in London where gardening would be pursued it is the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, yet there, at an elevation of somewhere about 200 feet, one of the officials tends his four small pets, the tenants of which are a fuchsia, a geranium, and two musk plants.

REMOVAL OF THE GREAT ORGAN IN ST. PAUL'S.—The great transept organ in St. Paul's Cathedral is now being removed by Bryceson Brothers and Morten, previous to its re-erection in the Victoria Assembly Rooms, Clifton, Bristol. London will therefore lose one of its largest and finest organs, and this magnificent instrument will once again be devoted to orchestral and secular music, as at the Panopticon, for which institution it was built in 1853 by Hill and Son.



EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oh, what a tangled net we weave
When first we practise to deceive. Scott.

THE wedding breakfast was over.

It had been served in the large breakfast-room looking out upon the lawn, and many compliments had been paid to the blushing, beautiful bride, who sat beside her bridegroom, himself so young and handsome on his wedding-day that Godfrey was more than once tempted to call him Howard, instead of father.

There had been much good cheer, with jokes and repartees and pleasant little nothings; the bridal cake had been cut by the bride herself, and the ring had come to Godfrey, who wore it on his little finger and made all manner of fun about it and what it portended.

And now Edith was in her room with her maid, Norah Long, and her mother, dressing for a short trip she was to make before embarking for her new home.

There were many beautiful bouquets on her table, the remembrances of friends, and Norah was to keep them for her till she returned, especially the one thrown at her feet by Gertie Westbrooke. Godfrey had brought this to her and told her whence it came, and she had found the slip of paper hidden in it and read thereon:

"From little Gertie Westbrooke, with her love, and Heaven bless you."

There was a quick throbbing of her heart and a faint touch of the iron hand about the throat as she read the words, though why even so much as a shadow of that hand should trouble her now she could not tell, for she was happy, with scarcely a regret for the past, but for some reason the lines which Gertie Westbrooke had penned affected her strangely. She had received costly gifts that day, but with none had there come a "Heaven bless you," save this tiny bouquet, and as she placed it herself in water she whispered:

"I do believe it's the only blessing I have had. I'll find the child when I come back, and thank her for it."

She was dressed at last in her handsome black silk, with her jaunty round hat and feather, which made her look so young and girlish, and then, turning to Norah, she bade her leave the room as she wished to be alone with her mother for a few moments.

"Mother," she said, when the door had closed on Norah, "Mr. Schuyler is so kind and generous, he

[THE BLESSING.]

has told me to ask him anything to-day, and he will grant it, and so I have concluded just for once to bring up the past and ask him if, before leaving England, I may find where baby was buried, and order her a grave-stone. You can attend to it, you know, and I shall feel that everything has been done which I ought to do. What do you think of it?"

She was buttoning her gloves as she turned towards her mother, but stopped suddenly, struck by the expression of the face which met her eyes, and which she knew meant so much.

"Do nothing of the kind; do nothing of the kind. Are you crazy, girl? Never allude to the child, if you wish to be happy."

Mrs. Barrett spoke rapidly and excitedly.

With a nameless terror of some threatened danger, Edith asked:

"Why, mother? Why not mention the child this once, to-day, when he said ask what I pleased? Why must I not?"

"Because—because—" and Mrs. Barrett came close to her and whispered: "He doesn't know there was a child. I did not tell him that."

"Don't know there was a child! Did not tell him that!" Edith repeated, and her face was like the face of the dead as she continued: "What do you mean? You did not tell him anything! I wrote it in the letter—all, everything; if he read it he knows about my baby. Moth— Moth—"

She could not say the whole name—could not articulate another word for the awful suspicion which flashed upon her—bringing back the iron hand, which clutched her in a death-like grasp, and made her writhe and gasp for breath.

"Tell me the whole truth! Did you withhold my letter? Did he ever see it?"

"Never! Edith, listen to me now," and Mrs. Barrett spoke sternly. "It is time this folly ended. Do you think I would let you throw away the chance for which I had waited so long? Had Mr. Schuyler known the truth as you wrote it he would not have married you, and as your mother it was my duty to interfere and save you from the consequences of your rashness. I kept your letter, and told him what I liked. I said you were in love when very young—scarcely fifteen—that the object of your love was greatly your inferior, and that I opposed the affair with all my power—that in spite of all you were secretly engaged, and would have been married, no doubt, had he not been suddenly killed. I told him, too, that the manner of his death was a fearful shock to your nerves, from which you had not yet recovered, as you now sometimes felt a choking sensation in your throat when reminded of the past, and I asked

him never to refer to it if he wished to spare you pain. He promised he would not. He did not ask the name of the young man, nor where he lived; indeed he was not at all anxious to discuss the matter, and stopped me before I was quite done by telling me he had heard enough, and that he was satisfied. I think, however, the matter did annoy him secretly, and from that you can judge what would have been the result had I given him your letter. Believe me, I acted for the best, and though you can now tell him, if you like, I trust you have too much good sense to do so, or at least will take time to consider. You are his wife; nothing can alter that, and the past cannot in any way affect him, provided he knows nothing of it. To tell him now would be to wound him cruelly, and my advice to you is to let the matter rest, and take the good offered to you."

Edith made no reply. Indeed she could not have spoken to have saved her life for the gasping, choking, palpitating sensation in her throat, while her heart seemed to be beating wildly with such throbs of pain as she had never felt before.

Gradually as her mother talked she sank down upon the couch, where she lay in a crumpled heap, her face as white as ashes, and her eyes staring wildly like the eyes of one choking to death.

And when at last she spoke it was only in a whisper that she said:

"Oh, mother, you make me wish I was dead."

There was the sound of wheels upon the gravelled road, and Mr. Schuyler's voice at the door, saying the carriage was waiting.

"Let it wait; I cannot go now," Edith gasped, trying in vain to struggle to her feet and then falling back among the cushions, weak and powerless to help herself.

Opening the door, Mrs. Barrett bade Mr. Schuyler enter, and then closing it again drew him quickly into the little dressing-room before he caught sight of Edith lying so still and helpless in her misery.

"I am sorry, but I suppose she cannot help it," she began, "she is so weak and nervous, but something I said to her of that early affair, you know, has affected Edith so much as almost to bring on a faint, and she is there on the sofa unable to sit up. Be very gentle with her, do. It is my fault."

For a man to be told that his two-hours' bride has fainted because reminded of a former love affair is not very pleasant, and Mr. Schuyler winced and grew hot and cold, and a very little annoyed.

But he had known all the time that Edith's love in its full extent was yet to be won, and so the humiliation was not nearly so hard, and his voice was very tender and kind as he bent over her and said:

"Edith, my darling, it distresses me to see you thus. I had thought—I had hoped—Edith, you are not sorry you are my wife when I am so glad?" There was something pleading in his tone, and it roused Edith, and sitting up she said:

"No, I am not sorry, and Heaven helping me, I'll be a good, true wife to you, but, oh—oh—you must bear with me, and if I am not all, or what you believe me to be, forgive me, will you? I am not to blame."

He did not in the least know what she meant, nor did he particularly care.

She was excited, he thought, and he tried to comfort and soothe her, and laid her head on his shoulder and held her closely to him, and told her to calm herself, and motioned Mrs. Barrett away with a gesture of impatience, and when Godfrey came to the door he answered:

"Send the carriage away. We will take the next train. Mrs. Schuyler is suddenly ill and cannot go just yet."

He had called her Mrs. Schuyler, she was his wife, and a feeling of reassurance and quiet began to steal over Edith as she sat with her head on her husband's shoulder and his arm around her waist, and with this feeling came a sensation akin to love for the man who was so kind to her and who had been so deceived.

But not by her: she was not in the least to blame, and she meant to tell him all, but not then—not then. It was neither the time nor the place. It should be when they were away alone, before the day was over, and then if he chose to put her from him, and go back without her, he could do so, and she would say it was right.

She grew better rapidly after this decision was reached, and though her face was very pale, and there was a frightened look in her eyes, she met her friends at last with a smile, and gave some laughing excuse for her almost faint—said the day was warm—that she had not been well or slept much for weeks—that she was subject to such attacks, but thought it most unfortunate that she should have one that day of all others.

Lady Maisland thought so too. She was the great lady of the occasion, and felt that she was very amiable and good to honour by her presence the wedding of her late friend Mrs. Sinclair's hired companion.

And she said to her daughter Blanche that, though the bride was rather pretty, and stylish in her Parisian clothes, there were still about her unmistakable signs of the class from which she came.

And the great lady shook out the folds of her olive green silk and fanned herself decorously and wondered where Mrs. Schuyler got the beautiful feathers in her hat, and where she could find one like it for Blanche, on whom everything looked alike, and who had devoted herself assiduously to Robert Macpherson when she learned that he had money, and that there was in the family on the Macpherson side a title that might some day come to him.

"Macpherson? Macpherson? I wonder who his mother was?" Lady Maisland had said. "The Macphersons are an old Scotch family, and it seems to me that I have heard years ago of a dreadful misalliance of one of the sons; so, my dear, I wish you to be a little careful and not allow this young man to be too attentive until I have inquired about him."

So Miss Blanche obeyed her mother by devoting herself to the young man instead of allowing him to be devoted to her, and was not sorry for the sudden illness of the bride which kept her and her mother at Oakwood a few hours longer, for they were to travel a part of the way with Mr. Schuyler and his wife.

Edith was much better when the time for the next train grew near, but there was on her part a steady avoidance of her mother, who had deceived her so—a coldness of manner which Mrs. Barrett felt but did not mind. So long as her end was obtained she was not scrupulous as to the means. She loved her daughter in her way, and now that she was Mrs. Howard Schuyler she would like to make much of her and be made much of in return, but if Edith was foolish enough to resent the means she had used to place her where she was, could not help it, and bore her punishment very meekly, and was not at all demonstrative when at last her daughter said good-bye to her just as she said it to the others and took her seat in the carriage.

"Upon my word she is setting up above her mother so soon," Lady Maisland said to Blanche; "did not even kiss her good-bye. I should say these were airs; but what can one expect from that sort of people?"

Mr. Schuyler, too, noticed the formal leave-taking, and though he was better pleased to have it thus than he would have been had there been kissing and crying over the woman he secretly disliked and distrusted without knowing why he did so, he was a little surprised and wondered if it were a feeling of

pride born of her elevation which had so soon affected Edith.

Alas, he little understood her or dreamed of the conflict going on in her mind as she was whirled rapidly along the road through the beautiful English country to the place where they were to spend the night and where Edith meant to tell him all.

CHAPTER XVIII.

One hearty now, without disguise,
Is worth a hundred by-and-bys. Anon.

DINNER was over in the pleasant house where they had stopped for the night, and drawing his chair near to the open window of their little parlour, Mr. Schuyler sat down to enjoy the sweet summer air, as it came stealing in laden with the perfume of flowers and the freshly cut hay upon the lawn.

Edith was in the dressing-room adjoining, pretending to arrange her hair, but in reality trying to make up her mind how to begin the story she must tell him.

And how would he receive it—the man who had been so deceived? Would he spurn her at once, or, rather than let the world know of his disgrace, would he keep her with him, a wife merely in name, whom he never could love or respect?

"Oh, Father in Heaven," she whispered, as she bent her throbbing head a moment upon the cold marble of the bureau, "you know I am not to blame in this; help me to tell him and incline him to receive it aright."

Strengthened by this prayer for aid, she gave no time for farther hesitation, but going swiftly to her husband's side she laid her hand on his shoulder in an appealing kind of way and said to him, softly:

"Mr. Schuyler!"

Now, during the two hours in which he had had Edith all to himself and felt that she really was his own he had almost fallen in love with her in sober earnest.

Before that day he had greatly admired and liked and respected and desired her, but something in the actual possession of her had stirred a deeper feeling in his heart than mere pride in her personal attractions, and when he felt the touch of her hand and heard the sound of her voice a great throb of delight thrilled through his veins, and drawing her to him he made her sit upon his knee, and, smoothing her cheek caressingly, said to her:

"Don't call me Mr. Schuyler, please. I'd rather be Howard to you now that you are my wife. It will seem to lessen the years between us, and I do not want to be so much older than my darling. Call me Howard now, and let me hear how it sounds."

"Not yet," Edith said; "not till I have told you something which should have been told before, and which may make a difference."

She spoke slowly and painfully, and Mr. Schuyler detected signs of choking in her voice, and, guessing at once that she was thinking of the early lover, said to her, very kindly but firmly:

"Don't, Edith, please; don't tell me anything which will distress you. I do not wish to hear it. Your mother told me enough—all I care to know—and I am satisfied."

"But, Howard"—she called him thus involuntarily, and there was a world of pathos and pitiful entreaty in her voice, while the eyes she fixed upon him were swimming in tears—"but, Howard, suppose mother did not tell you the whole—"

"Then you need not," he answered, quickly. "If you are good and true that is all I ask, and I know you are. I dare say your mother did not tell me as eloquently as you could have told me how much you loved that man, and how your heart ached for him; and you wish me to know it all, but I tell you I am satisfied. You are now my wife, and nothing can make any difference, even if you were his widow instead of his affianced, though widows are not to my taste. I am satisfied, and, to prove that I am, I do not even care to know his name or where he lived. In fact, I would rather not know it, would rather you should never refer to it again, for it is not a pleasant topic; and now for the favour you were to ask me on our wedding-day which I was to grant even to half my kingdom."

He spoke playfully and held her closer to him while the hot tears poured like rain over Edith's face.

What should she do? Should she tell him in spite of his protest and his assurance that he was satisfied? No, she could not with the memory of his words "Widows are not to my taste" still ringing in her ears, and so she let the opportunity pass, and the only favour she asked was that whatever might come in the future he would have faith in her and believe that she wished to do right.

"Of course I will, you foolish little girl. You are agitated and tired to night," he said, and then, as if struck by a sudden thought, he added: "Only tell me one thing, darling—if that young man had lived and not improved beyond what he was when you

knew him, and you had grown to be what you are, could you have loved him now as you did then?"

"Perhaps not. I never thought of it in that light," Edith said.

And her husband continued:

"One question now. Do you believe you can in time love me as well as you did him?"

"Yes, Howard, I know I can."

Edith spoke quickly, and her arms wound themselves involuntarily around her husband's neck, while for the first time she kissed him unsolicited.

"Then, my darling," he responded, "there is nothing before us but happiness, if Heaven so will it, and may it deal by me as I do by you, my precious wife."

He was growing to love her so fast, and Edith knew it, and felt her misery giving way, and her heart grew light again as it had been when she fancied he knew the whole.

It was a part of Mr. Schuyler's plan to visit Alnwick and go over the grand old castle, which at this season of the year was open to visitors. And Edith did not oppose him, though the neighbourhood of Alnwick was fraught with sad memories for her as having been Abelard's home. His friends were still living there, she knew from Godfrey, and the first night passed at the inn where they took rooms was passed in wakefulness, with a feeling of oppression and sadness which she could not shake off. Abelard had told her so much of Alnwick and the castle, and had talked of the time when she would visit it with him; and now he was dead, and she was there, the wife of another man, with that great secret weighing her down at times and casting a shadow on everything. How she wished she might see his home and the old mother he used to talk of so fondly, and yet when her husband said to her one morning, "Edith, I am going to call on some poor people who live about two miles from here. Perhaps you will like to go with me when I tell you who they are," she trembled and grew cold, and scarcely heard a word of the story he told her, which she knew so much better than he did.

"I called upon them last summer," he said, "when Godfrey was with me, and it is not necessary that I should go again, but I know it will please them, and I am so happy myself that I feel like conferring happiness on others. Will you go, darling? They will feel honoured if I bring them my young bride."

"Oh, Howard, no! Please don't ask me. I'd so much rather not," Edith cried, feeling how terrible it would be to go with her husband into the presence of Abelard's mother and hear her talk of him with no suspicion as to who she was.

No, she could not do it, and she expressed herself so decidedly that he looked at her curiously while a cloud passed over his face, and, without meaning to do so, he seemed displaced and out of sorts.

He was not accustomed to have his wishes thwarted, and he had set his heart upon taking his wife with him when he visited the Lyles, and after he had told her of his indebtedness to them he thought she ought to go out of deference to his wishes.

Surely it was not pride which prompted her unwillingness to call upon such people, for what business had she to be prouder than himself, he thought? and he seemed so moody and silent that Edith detected the change in his manner at once, and, resolving to conquer her own personal feelings, went up to him and said:

"Howard, I have changed my mind, I will go with you if you wish it."

He did wish it, and his face cleared as he said: "Thank you, darling. I am very glad, because I like to have you with me, and because I know the attention will be sure to please those people. Did I tell you of the little boy to whom Godfrey gave his name when we stopped there last year on our way to Oakwood? He is always doing those things; has two or three namesakes at home, a thing of which I do not altogether approve, but in the case of these Nesbits I could not oppose it. Shall we start at once? It's only two miles distant, will you walk or ride?"

Edith chose to walk, and they set off together across the fresh green fields, and through the quiet, shaded lanes toward the low thatched cottage where Abelard Lyle was born, and where his mother sat knitting by the door with a placid expression in her calm face and the sunlight falling on her snowy hair.

It would be impossible to describe Edith's emotions as she walked with her husband through the lanes and fields and woods, where her boy-lover had so often been, and where he had thought some day to bring her and show her to his mother, and it seemed to her almost as if he was there, too, moving silently beside her; and once, when a leaf rustled at her feet, she started with a nervous cry and clung close to her husband's arm.

And yet it was not love or regret for the dead which thus affected her.

Her life with Abelard was like a far-off dream to her now, a thing apart from herself and her present life, and had her husband known she would not have felt as she did now with that secret on her mind, making her breathe quickly, and grow faint and pale when at last the house was reached, and she saw for the first time how humble and poor Abelard's home had been.

Everything pertaining to it, however, was scrupulously neat, and the little grass plot before the door showed frequent acquaintance with sickle or shears, while the sweet, old-fashioned flowers on the narrow border told of good taste in some one.

But it was all so small and meagre and poor, and the calico dress of the old lady knitting on the porch was faded and patched, and the white kerchief pinned about her neck was darned in several places.

She had a fair, sweet old face, with a resemblance to Abelard. Edith thought when at the sound of their footsteps she looked up with a smile of welcome and inquiry.

From having always lived near the border she spoke with a broad Scotch accent, which Edith did not comprehend at first.

She was evidently greatly pleased and flattered that Mr. Schuyler had come to see her again, and brought his bonny bride, whose hand she held in her own, and into whose blushing face she gazed curiously as she bade her welcome, and led her into the house where Mrs. Nesbit, the daughter, sat with her sleeves rolled up combing her long black hair, with a bit of glass before her, and Godfrey Schuyler asleep in his rude cradle.

Mrs. Nesbit, or Jenny as she was called, was not naturally as refined as her mother, and she kept on combing her hair without any apology, talking rapidly all the time, and saying what an honour she felt it to be for the likes of Mr. Schuyler to visit the likes of them, though to be sure he owed them something for her poor brother's death.

"You know about that, I s'pose?"

And she looked up at Edith, whose dress she had been closely inspecting between each passage of the comb through her hair.

Edith nodded in token that she did know. She could not speak, the room was so small and so close and the iron fingers held her throat with so firm a clutch that she could sit perfectly still and listen while the old story was told again by Mr. Schuyler, and the mother wept silently, ejaculating now and then:

"Oh, my puir bairn, my puir bairn!"

Jenny did not cry. She was looking at the bride in her rich apparel and thinking how proud she was to be so unmoved as if it was nothing to her how many poor men lost their lives to save that of a Schuyler.

And Mr. Schuyler too had similar thoughts with Jenny, and believed it was contempt for these people, and their surroundings which kept Edith so silent in spite of all his efforts to draw her into the conversation and make her seem gracious and interested.

Alas! he could not guess what she was enduring as she sat there in Abelard's home and heard them talking of him and all the incidents connected with his death.

"You dinna ken my lad," the mother said to her; "an' so you dinna ken how sair I was for him. Ah, he was a bonny lad and gude."

Edith nodded, and the old lady went on, now addressing Mr. Schuyler:

"A man who kenned my boy, and see him kilt comed here onc't an' tapid me about it, and said there was a young lass there who might be Abel's sweetheart; heard ye tell of her like?"

No, he had not heard of her, or he had forgotten, and as Edith was not supposed to know anything of the circumstances she was spared the questioning, and Mrs. Lyle went on to say that if there was such a lass she'd like so much to know something of her.

"Mayhap," and she turned again to Edith, "mayhap you'll find her some day, and if you do woot ye let me know?"

Had her life depended upon it Edith could not have spoken, and a nod was her only answer, while her cheeks burned scarlet and the perspiration gathered about her mouth.

Mr. Schuyler was angry, and rose to take leave, while Jenny, who was angry also at what she believed to be the lady's pride, began in a flippant way to say that, poor as they were, they had some grand relatives; her oldest sister, Dorothea, had married into one of the high Scotch families, where they kept twenty servants and dined at six o'clock.

"Hoity-toity, Jenny, my lass," said the mother, "what was the good o' that? Dinna them foine folk turn my Dolly and her maun out o' door and never spake to 'em till he died?"

"Yes, mother, but their boy got the money at last, and was here to see us a spell ago, lookin' as foine as any gentleman," Jenny said, and then, having given the final twist to her hair, and seeing that their guests were really going, she woke the little Godfrey Schuyler, and took him proudly to Edith, who could and did kiss him, an act which made amends for much of her silence and seeming haughtiness of manner.

Once outside the cottage in the open, air Edith recovered her voice and drew a long, deep breath, which, to the somewhat irritated and disappointed Mr. Schuyler, sounded like a sigh of relief; and in one sense it was so. While sitting there, listening to the homely talk and seeing the homely surroundings of Abelard's family, Edith had been conscious that a curious train of thought was passing through her mind.

Was Abelard satisfied with this when he was there, an inmate of that cottage, and, had he lived, would he have dragged her with him to that level, or, as she believed, have risen to a height from which to look back would have been disagreeable and hard? Either possibility was not pleasant to contemplate, and she was glad when her husband caused a diversion to her thoughts by proposing to go.

Had Edith followed out her impulse she would have kissed that kind old lady, Abelard's mother, for the sake of the dead son, but after her persistent silence and reserve there could be no excuse for such a proceeding, and, besides, she did not think her husband would quite like her to be so familiar with a person whom she knew he considered so greatly his inferior, notwithstanding his politeness to her, so she merely took the little hand in her own, and pressed it hard, managing to say "good-bye," and then she passed through the low door, out into the sunshine, like one passing from prison walls into freedom again.

For a time Mr. Schuyler was silent, never saying a word until they reached the border of the wood through which a broad path led to Alnwick; then, as Edith paused a moment and looked back at the thatched roof with the creeper climbing over it, he too looked back and said:

"I am glad my lot was not cast among such people—I cannot say they are to my taste, especially that garrulous Mrs. Nesbit, with her comb and bare arms. The old lady is better, and has a good deal of natural refinement. I think our visit did her good; such people are always pleased with attention from their betters, and it certainly does us no harm to give it. Edith, my dear—"

He spoke a little sternly now, and his face was overcast.

"I am sorry you chose to be so quiet and reserved; if I remember right you scarcely spoke at all. It would have pleased me better if you had made an effort to be more social with them, and I really owe them so much."

"Oh, Howard, please forgive me. It was not pride which kept me silent. I wanted to talk but could not," Edith said, while the tears rained over her white face.

He had made her cry—his bride of a few days—and he was sorry for it at once, and bade her sit down beside him on a rude bench by the path, and wound his arm around her, and said he was hasty and had expected too much from her, who could not of course sympathize with his interest in the Lyles.

Edith listened to him, crimsoning with shame, and feeling like a felon who is hiding his secret from the world.

Why had she not told him that first day of married life with him? Why had she not shrieked it in his ear and compelled him to listen to her? It would have been easier then than it was now when so much had happened to make it hard, if not impossible.

Yes, impossible, that was what she said to herself, remembering the bare arms and the comb and the talkative Mrs. Nesbit.

She could not declare that woman to be her sister-in-law, and she forced the secret still farther down into her heart, and when her husband bade her kiss him in token of forgiveness she kissed him twice and there was peace between them as they walked arm in arm through the leafy woods and grassy lanes back to their rooms at Alnwick.

But Edith's mind was not at rest. Thoughts of that white-haired, sweet-faced old lady, knitting in the sunshine, were constantly in her mind. She had been cold, almost rude to her, and she wished to make amends—to leave, if possible, a good impression of herself in Abelard's old home—to have his mother's blessing as a guaranty of happiness in the life before her, and as she reflected, lying awake many hours of the night, her thoughts gradually formed themselves into a plan she resolved to carry out.

Her husband had been invited to dine at the castle

with a party of gentlemen, who were about to introduce some farming implement to the agent of the estate, who acted as host on the occasion. As no ladies were included Edith was to be left alone for several hours, and she determined to improve the opportunity for redressing any wrong she might have done to Mrs. Lyle.

It was twelve o'clock before her husband left her, and as soon as he was gone she donned her walking-dress and set off for the cottage near the wood. Fortunately for her Mrs. Nesbit was out, but the placid old lady sat knitting again on the porch with little Godfrey Schuyler playing near her on the floor. She recognized Edith at once, and seemed both glad and surprised to see her.

"I wanted to come again," Edith said, sitting down close beside the woman. "I was not feeling well when I was here yesterday, and I could not talk as I wished to do, but I did not mean it for coldness or pride. Mr. Schuyler is so grateful for what your son did for him, and I—I am interested in you too—more even than he can be, and if you like you may tell me all about your boy who died in that dreadful manner."

There were tears in Edith's eyes, and her voice trembled as she spoke, while Mrs. Lyle stopped her knitting and looked curiously at her. She had thought her proud and haughty, and had felt a little hurt at her silence and reserve, while her daughter, in her coarser way, had not hesitated to call her airy and an upstart, wondering who she was, to feel so much above them. That she was rather pretty even Jenny conceded, while her mother thought her very beautiful and grand. "Fit to be a duchess" was her verdict now when she saw her again so humble and sweet, apologizing for her reserve of the day before and asking to hear about her poor dead boy.

She liked to talk of him, and, once launched upon the subject did not know when to stop, but talked on and on, narrating incidents of his babyhood, boyhood and early manhood, while Edith listened with hands clasped tightly together and a heart which beat almost audibly.

"And ye are goin' where he's buried," Mrs. Lyle said to her. "And if ye want an old woman's blessing, maylike you'll keep his grave fresh and clean, and send me a posy from its some day."

"I will, I will, I promise you I will, and if I can ever tell you about that girl who loved him—I will do so," Edith said, vehemently.

And then, impelled by an impulse she could not resist, she continued:

"Mrs. Lyle, I want to ask you something which you'll please keep to yourself. You are old, and I am young; you are good, and I am not, but I want to be, oh, so much. If there was something in your life which you supposed your husband knew, and which, after you were married, you found he did not know, though through no fault of yours, and if you felt almost sure that had he known it he would not have married you, and might think less of you now, would you consider it your duty to tell him?"

Edith gasped out the words and sat panting with excitement and agitation, while Mrs. Lyle considered for a moment, and said what we will put in English:

"Is the something which he don't know a sin, a crime, a wrong to him or anybody?"

"No, not a sin, or wrong, only a mistake," Edith replied.

And the woman continued:

"Would the withholding it now do harm to any one?"

"No, never; on the contrary, the telling it might cause my husband to think less of me, and make us very unhappy."

"Then if you meant no wrong, and the telling it can do no good, and might do harm, and no one is interested but yourself, keep it to yourself," Mrs. Lyle said, while Edith felt herself growing light as air, with the burden lifted from her for ever, as she hoped and believed.

It was strange how much comfort she derived from Mrs. Lyle's advice, and how much confidence she felt in the judgment of this woman whom she had seen but once before. It was almost as if absolution had been granted her for her sins, past, present, and to come, and no religious devotee ever felt lighter and freer after a full confession than Edith did for a few moments after hearing Mrs. Lyle's decision.

"Thank you, thank you," she said. "You have done me so much good. I have been so miserable, and there was no one whom I could talk with about it. I shall not forget you, Mrs. Lyle, and sometimes I may perhaps write to you, and tell you of my home. And now I must go, but first will you give me your blessing? I want it so much."

And kneeling down before the old lady Edith bowed her beautiful head, while a trembling hand was laid gently on her shining hair, and a trembling voice said, reverently:

"Heaven bless and keep my bonny child and make her a gude and happy wife, an' gie her many bairns to comfort her auld age."

She was thinking of her Abelard who died, and Edith thought of him too, and there were tears in her eyes as she rose from her knees, and, kissing the sweet-faced, white-haired woman who had done her so much good, went out from her presence with a happier, lighter heart than she had known for many a day.

It was all right since Abelard's mother had said so and blessed her, and she could be happy now, and she was.

When her husband returned from the castle he met a very bright, beaming face at the door of his room, and his young wife's arms were round his neck, and his wife herself was on his knee when she told him that she had been again to see Mrs. Lyle and made ample amends for all yesterday's reserve. She did not tell him of the advice or blessing, but said:

"I know I left a good impression, and I promised to write to her sometime and tell her of my home. She seems a very nice old lady."

Mr. Schuyler tried to be pleased because Edith was so sure he would be, though, truth to tell, he would rather she were too reserved than too familiar with people like the Lyles, and from her account her interview with Mrs. Lyle had certainly reached the bounds of familiarity. Still, as she had done it for his sake, and because she thought it right, he was obliged to seem grateful, and kissed her glowing cheek and called her a conscientious little puss, and thought how beautiful she was in her pretty evening dress, with the wild flowers in her hair, and felt himself the most fortunate man in England to possess so much youth and beauty.

A few days later found them again at Oakwood, where Godfrey met them at the station and saluted Edith as his "mamma," while his eyes danced with mischief and fun. He did not tell her of the letter of dismaying which had come to him from home in answer to his own, wherein the charms of the new mother had been so graphically described. But he laughed to himself every time he thought of it, and what they were prepared for, and then thought of the rare type of loveliness whom he teasingly called mamma, and to whom he was as attentive as if he had been her lover instead of her step-son.

Robert Macpherson was still at Oakwood, and greatly to Godfrey's delight had decided upon going to Schuyler Hill. "The very nicest chap in the world," Godfrey still continued to think of him, in spite of the hair parted in the middle.

"But something has come over the spirit of his dream," he said to Edith, when talking of him. "Ever since he came from visiting those friends of his he has had fits of melancholy and acts a good deal like a man in love, but when I put it to him he denied it indignantly, and said no girl whom he would have would ever marry him, and then he went straight off to see the little Westbrook who threw you that bouquet, you know. He is wonderfully struck with her, and wants to paint her portrait as a fancy picture, and call it 'La Petite Soeur,' but that Rogers dame guards her pet like an old she-dragon, and will not let Gertie sit on any account, even though I promise to be present at the sittings and see fair play done."

Edith smiled derisively, and felt that she did not blame Dame Rogers for objecting to Godfrey Schuyler, with his saucy eyes and teasing ways, as protector for her child.

Godfrey said that Bob had made two or three sketches of her already, drawing from his memory of course, but none of them quite suited him. He must have her sit to him, and he—Godfrey—thought it a shame for that Rogers woman to be so much afraid of having her protégée looked at by such nice chaps as himself and Bob.

Edith had never fairly seen the child whom Robert Macpherson desired as a model "La Soeur," but she felt a deep interest in her, both for the blessing sent on her bridal day, and because of the strong affection the child had inspired in Mrs. Barrett, who seemed to feel worse at the thought of parting with her than with Edith herself.

The first meeting between mother and daughter had been rather cool and constrained, for Edith had lost confidence in her parent's integrity, and could not help showing it.

Still she was about to leave her, and at the last, when she went to say good-bye, her manner softened greatly, for it was still her mother whom she kissed with many tears, and who herself broke down and cried when the last farewell was said and Edith went from her door for ever. But she did not sob as pitifully then as when an hour later Gertie Westbrook came and hung about her neck so lovingly and said:

"I am sorry to leave you here alone. I wish you would go too."

Edith had not said that—Edith did not wish it, and Mrs. Barrett knew why, but it hurt her none the less, and Gertie's fond regrets and words of love were very dear to her, as was the little girl whom she had learned to love so much and would miss when she was gone.

"I shall never forget you, never; and, maybe, if I am ever married, you shall live with me, and be my grandma," Gertie said, with a dim perception that her friend's heart was sore with a longing to go with her daughter, who did not want her; and then Mrs. Barrett sobbed aloud, and held the girl close to her bosom, and said:

"I never thought I could love a child as I love you, little Gertie. I am a hard, wicked woman, no doubt, but I want you to be good, and surely I may pray for that. Heaven bless you, little Gertie, and make your life as happy as you are sweet and gentle. Good-bye."

She put the child gently from her, and went quickly into her own room, where she could be alone, and we are almost certain that the parting with her daughter did not hurt her half as much, or leave so deep a wound, as the parting with Gertie Westbrook.

(To be continued.)

LITTLE SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IF the old dictum "Happy is the bride that the sun shines on" may be said to have any significance then Lily Davis and Ernest Hartley should have been abundantly satisfied when the day fixed upon for their wedding arrived. The morning broke beautifully bright and everything seemed to conspire to render the occasion an unusually delightful one, and the young couple were happy—very, very happy.

Under the most ordinary circumstances candidates for matrimony are, or ought to be, happy on their wedding-day, but in the case of our hero and heroine there was much that does not commonly attend such affairs to render them joyful and contented. They were so entirely wrapped up in each other, so confident in each other's love, so entirely suited to each other in every respect, and they had passed through so much of trial and tribulation in their courtship, that to them their union seemed a doubly sacred one, cemented as it was by both joy and suffering.

And yet there was one dark cloud on the horizon of their almost perfect bliss. Neither of them alluded to it, but down deep in their hearts they felt it. This was the stigma which attached to Lily's father. Lily felt that she was not to blame for this, of course, but still the burning, bitter, degrading fact remained that she was a felon's daughter, and that while preparations for her wedding were going on her father occupied a felon's cell, and would in a few short days be brought to the bar of justice to answer for his crimes against society.

She could not shake the idea off. Like a dreadful nightmare it haunted her, sleeping and waking, poisoning her joy, standing like a gaunt spectre between her and her felicity.

Hartley thought of it also. He could not forget the hateful fact any more than Lily could, but it affected him only so far as it affected Lily. He would rather, of course, that no stain attached to her parentage, but the fact did not render her less worthy, less virtuous, less loveable in his sight. On the contrary it rendered her dearer to him, if possible, than though she had descended from an unsullied line. He knew how deep was her humiliation and anguish, and his soul went out to her in sympathy and love when he saw the shadow on her brow, which sometimes she could not drive away.

The old Count Gurowski had insisted that Lily should take up her abode in his residence a week previous to the wedding, and that all arrangements for the affair should be perfected there.

"I must be your fader for de time being," he said, when she protested against taking advantage of his generosity; "and I must have mine own way or dere will be some troubles in de house."

So Lily submitted, and an army of dressmakers were employed to prepare her for the happy occasion. It had been arranged that the young couple should be married in the house, and that immediately after they should start on their wedding tour. This, perhaps, is all that it is necessary to say concerning preliminaries, which were about the same as usually accompany like events, and we shall therefore come at once to the marriage.

Of course the friends of both bride and bridegroom were present in full force, and the old count was so happy that he could hardly contain himself. It is hardly necessary to say that Lily looked perfectly charming, our young lady friends will all understand this as a matter of course. Tony Tucker, after viewing her critically, declared that "she looked good

enough to eat, and that there wasn't nary gal atop of the earth, except Brownie, who could hold a candle to her."

The minister had arrived and everything was in readiness when suddenly the Count Gurowski took Lily aside and said to her, with a grave face:

"Mine child, the time for your marriage has come, and it is time I shall tell you something. I was to give de bride away myself, but de fader is de proper person to do dat, and your fader must do it."

Lily turned deadly pale and trembled in every joint. Here was the spectre that had all day pursued her; here it was with her at the very altar. She had thought of her father all day and had only driven him from her mind for one brief moment when the time for her marriage arrived, and now her pure soul thrilled with horror as she listened to the old count's words.

"My father!" she moaned, piteously. "Oh, sir, this is cruel. You know my father is in prison!"

"He is free!" replied the count, decisively, "and must give de bride away! But nobody here shall know him. Don't tremble, mine poor child; be brave. He will be here directly. I shall go for him."

Lily jumped at the conclusion at once that the old count had secured her father's liberation, and although she felt grateful to him for that still she could not help thinking that he had erred in judgment to bring him there at such a time.

While she stood endeavouring to control the bitter feelings which rankled in her lacerated heart suddenly the door was thrown open and a tall, courtly, magnificent-looking gentleman entered.

Nobody present knew him, and the guests looked from one to the other as if seeking an explanation of the intrusion.

For a moment the gentleman regarded Lily with a look of ineffable fondness, and then turning to the minister he said, with much emotion:

"Everything is ready, sir. Proceed with the ceremony."

"If the young people desire it I will do so," replied the clergyman; "but I was given to understand that the Count Gurowski was to give the bride away."

"The bride's father will perform that duty," replied the gentleman, with still more emotion than he had at first shown, and then, unable any longer to control himself, he held out his arms toward the bride and exclaimed, with choking utterance: "I was the Count Gurowski, but I am now George Percival Raymond, an English merchant, and your father."

"My father!" exclaimed Lily, like one in a dream; "my father! I thought my father—"

She could proceed no farther. A deadly feeling of faintness came over her, her brain reeled, she staggered forward and would have fallen to the floor had not the gentleman's outstretched arms received her.

"Yes, your father, my long-lost darling, my only one!" he murmured as he kissed her cold lips over and over again.

It was some moments ere Lily was restored to consciousness, and when she was quite herself again Mr. Raymond said:

"Yes, my darling, you are my only child, and I shall proceed to relate as briefly as possible how we were separated and how we are now happily reunited."

"Before I married your mother there was, among my lady friends, a Miss Ruth Reynolds—she was of good parentage, wealthy, and very beautiful. In common with many others I was attracted by her pretty face, and paid her perhaps more than ordinary attention. I soon ascertained, however, that she was proud, arrogant, vain and revengeful, and I took the earliest opportunity to drop her society."

"After my marriage to your mother Miss Reynolds also married. She married a man named Moreland, who was some years her senior, a perfect gentleman, and quite wealthy. From that time I lost sight of her, and never saw her again till I fortunately met her some months since."

"If I lost sight of her, however, she kept me in full view. She never forgave me for cutting loose from her, and when you were born she determined to wreak her vengeance not only upon me but upon your mother."

"The nurse whom we employed to take charge of you came to us well recommended, and was naturally, I believe, a pretty good woman, but she was greedy for money and was not proof against my enemy's gold. The result was that you were stolen and conveyed away, none knew whither; nor could I, although I put the best detective talent at work, and offered large sums for your recovery, get the slightest clue to your whereabouts. The blow killed your poor mother, who died some months afterward."

"Years rolled on, but I never quite relinquished the hope of one day finding you. What induced me to seek you in the manner I did I know not. I must have been directed by some power outside of myself. However that may be, I disguised myself, assumed the part of a detective, and have since been known

to the police force as Izzy Clincher and have made for myself quite a reputation as a detective.

"One day, while lounging about I suddenly encountered one Jack Lynch, the husband of the woman who was your nurse and who kidnapped you in infancy. I spoke to him but he denied that his name was Lynch. He claimed Luke Davis as his proper name, but he could not deceive me; I knew him and at once the hope sprang up in my heart that by following his track I should gain some knowledge of you. The result proved that I was not mistaken. I soon found out that Lynch was connected with a gang of counterfeiters, and I took them all under surveillance at once. One of this gang, I ascertained, greatly to my surprise, was a man named Ralph Dobbs, who was formerly a valet of mine, and who had assumed the title of Lord Mortimer Littleton. He was a heartless scoundrel, who had deserted his wife, a worthy, hard-working woman, after having robbed her of every penny of her hard earnings. While on the track of this villain I traced him to a house, which, upon inquiry, I ascertained was occupied by a family named Moreland, and what was my surprise and joy to find out, upon farther investigation, that the lady of this mansion was the very person who had bribed the nurse to steal my child.

"Shortly after this fact came to my knowledge I ascertained that a grand party was to be given at the Moreland mansion, and, disguising myself, and assuming the title of Count Gurovski, I procured an invitation to the party, and there overheard a conversation between Lynch, Dobbs, and Mrs. Lynch—who was Mrs. Moreland's housekeeper—which gave me all the information I desired.

"I frightened Mrs. Moreland into making a full confession; but matters were not so bad as she supposed them to be. The housekeeper, with a view of securing a portion of her wealth, had led her to suppose that she had murdered the child according to directions, and when I had sufficiently frightened her I revealed my true character to her, and told her the truth concerning you. She was very penitent, and declared her intention to go away as soon as her misguiding daughter, Ruth, who had eloped with Dobbs, should return, I having previously informed her that I had put a detective on the track of the runaways, from whom I had just received a telegram to the effect that he had been entirely successful in his mission, and was already on his way home with Dobbs in custody and the daughter under his care.

"Here my narrative ends; for with the rest you are familiar. And now let the ceremony proceed which shall unite two loving hearts and render me the happiest old man in the universe."

We shall not attempt to describe the joy which followed this revelation, for the simple reason that words are inadequate to do justice to the subject. Suffice it to say that the ceremony was proceeded with, greatly to the satisfaction of all present, and that a more delighted couple than our hero and heroine never received the congratulations of loving friends.

After the ceremony was over, and the bride was receiving the customary kisses from all present, Tony Tucker approached Jennie Brown, and drew her gently to one corner of the room.

"Brownie," he said, pleadingly, "see how happy Ernest Hartley and Little Sunshine are! What's the reason we can't be as happy as they are?"

"Why, Tony," replied Jennie, with great apparent sincerity, "you don't suppose I'm going to marry you after making such an idiot of yourself in court the other day! Don't you know I told you I wouldn't have you the very next day?"

"Yes, I know all about it," returned Tony, with a sad countenance, "but you didn't mean it, Brownie. You couldn't be as cruel as that. Hain't I been taking lessons every day, and trying to polish myself up just to please you? And haven't I been workin' overwork every spare minute, and layin' up lots of money to start housekeepin' with? You ain't goin' back on a feller, Brownie; I know you ain't. And what's the use o' teasin' me? Oh, Brownie, if you'll only agree to marry me now I'll take my solemn affidavit I'll never make another speech again as long as I live, unless you give me permission. Come—won't you do it?"

"Why, I ain't ready to marry now, even if I were so inclined," replied Jennie, teasingly, rising.

"And I wish you wouldn't bother me."

"Not ready to marry!" exclaimed Tony, raising both hands and looking at Jennie as though he could devour her—"not ready to marry, and here you are all dressed up for a bridesmaid! Come, say yes—won't you?"

"If you behave yourself properly maybe I may marry you one of these days," said Jennie, provokingly, "and I think you ought to be satisfied with that."

"But I can't be satisfied with that, Brownie," persisted Tony. "One o' these days is all well enough,

but if you don't marry me now I'll spile. The minister is here and all the folks is here and everything. We couldn't get sich another chance if we should wait a hundred years. Oh, come—won't you take and marry me right off? Won't you, Brownie?"

Here they were interrupted by the bride, who approached leaning on the arm of Ernest Hartley, and said, gaily:

"What's all this whispering about I should like to know?"

"Why, I'm a-coaxing Brownie to get married while everything's handy," replied Tony, "and she won't do it. Won't you help me coax her, Sunshine? Do, and I'll never forget your kindness as long as I live. If I do you may shoot me!"

Thus appealed to Lily joined her voice to Tony's. "Come, Jennie," she pleaded, "why not be married now? You will never find a more convenient opportunity, and what signifies a few days' difference? You love Tony and he loves you, and—"

"Love her!" interposed Tony. "Well, if I don't love her then a fish don't love water. Love her! I love her harder than a horse can kick, and she knows it, and if she don't want to see me go to a lunatic asylum she'd better marry me right off!"

Lily's newly found father also took the ground that a double wedding would be a very proper thing, intimating that he and Tony had already arranged it; and thus beset on all sides Jennie Brown blushing took her position at Tony's side, and they were speedily made one.

"And now that you are happily married, my children," said Mr. Raymond, "and are about to start on the voyage of life together, flushed with high hopes and happy anticipations, listen to a few words of advice from the lips of an old man who has seen much of life and who is no poor judge of human nature. If you would be always happy avoid the first quarrel, for it is the first quarrel that causes domestic infelicity, as it is the first glass that leads to dissipation."

"You smile! You think it impossible that you should ever quarrel. I know you love each other sincerely. I tested that fully before I decided that you should marry. But also, my children, you will not find life all couleur de rose. You will find much to vex and trouble you as you journey onward together, and your chief care should be to examine closely, and guard yourselves carefully. Remember always that a soft answer turneth away wrath, and that love should rule in all things. Love begets love, and dislike begets dislike. Be mutually forbearing, therefore, and strive by example to correct each other's faults and foibles rather than by fault-finding to increase them. It is a mistake to suppose that because you love each other now you must of necessity, and under all circumstances, continue to love. This is very pretty in poetry, but life is practical, and the demon of discord may turn love into indifference. Above all things have perfect faith and trust in each other. In your case let it be

"Two minds with but a single thought—
Two hearts that beat as one."

"Have no secrets from each other, but be open and frank and truthful, and above all things allow no third party to come between you two. Regard everybody as your enemy who would say the slightest word in the way of disparagement to one of the other. If you follow these precepts you cannot very well go far astray. And now, as I see your carriage at the door, I will not keep you longer. So good-bye, my children, and may Heaven bless and preserve you!"

In a few moments more the guests had departed, and the old gentleman was left alone to muse on his newly found happiness and to lay plans for the future of the young couple.

It only remains now to call our characters before the reader and dispose of them in order, and our task is ended.

Hank, the detective, arrived safely only the day after the wedding with Dobbs and his very faulty but still unfortunate victim, Ruth Moreland.

It was not found necessary to try the distinguished Lord Mortimer on the charge of bigamy, for a clear case was made out against him and the rest of the counterfeiters on the testimony of old Flint, who turned Queen's evidence, and they were all found guilty and sentenced to penal servitude for a long term of years. Old Flint's treachery to his vile companions, however, did not save him from meeting with a terrible punishment. His wife died suddenly of apoplexy; but he still continued to practise meanness and dishonesty, although he was careful to do nothing which would bring him within the clutches of the law. As a consequence he day by day grew richer and richer and more and more penurious and cruel.

At length one day, about a year after the trial and sentence of the counterfeiters, a number of prisoners made their escape from prison, and among them Luke Davis, alias Lynch. That very night old Flint's

house was entered by burglars, and on the following morning he was found dead on the floor of his bedroom, his head having been beaten to a pulp with some blunt instrument.

Davis was never captured. His wife took to drinking deeply after his sentence, and eventually died miserably in the work-house.

Mrs. Moreland sold out her effects, and with her daughter Ruth went nobody knew whither.

While Ernest Hartley and his bride were absent on their bridal tour, the old gentleman, Mr. Raymond, was not idle. He purchased a handsome furnished residence for them but a short distance from town, and upon their return presented Ernest with the deeds of the property. The young couple were fairly taken by surprise, and could only look their thanks at first, for they were unable to speak. But Ernest was still more surprised upon going to his place of business to find that a half-interest in the concern had been bought for him, and that he was a full partner.

Nor was Tony Tucker forgotten by the old gentleman. After he had acquired sufficient learning to start in business in a small way, Mr. Raymond bought a livery stable, and placed Tony and his brother at the head of it as proprietors.

Mike Donovan, the Irishman whom Lily had befriended on his first arrival in this country, is now coachman to his benefactress, while his sister Mary lives in her house.

And having now disposed of all our prominent characters, we will bid the reader farewell.

THE END.

A NOVEL EXPERIMENT.—It is reported that a gentleman generally residing near London, who owns between two and three thousand acres of land in Dorsetshire, being tired of the complaints of his tenants about game and gamekeepers, ordered his steward to propose to his tenants that they should pay a shilling an acre advance on their rents, and he would give them up the full right to the game. It is said the offer was gladly accepted, and two out of three keepers are being discharged, and the services of the aged head keeper retained to manage the woods. The alteration gives the landlord over 200*l.* a year.

DISCOVERY OF A REREDOS IN WORCESTER COLLEGE HALL.—A few days ago, as some workmen were engaged removing the orchestra at the east end of College Hall, indications presented themselves of the existence of moulding-work under the plaster, which was subsequently removed. This was a work requiring great care, as it was soon found that the workmen had come upon an important discovery—no less, in fact, than the existence of an ancient reredos in good state of preservation. The central panel contains, it is believed, the figure of our Saviour. On each side of the figure there is a shaft in the late Norman style, but the capital of that on the right is gone. The figure is surrounded by a moulding in the form of a quatre-foil, the spandrels of which contain emblems of the Evangelists. On each side of this panel there are two niches with groined canopies, which are supposed to have contained the figures of the four Evangelists, but they have disappeared. Portions of the colouring and gilding are still perceptible, leaving no doubt but that at one period the work was one of great magnificence. The discovery will doubtless challenge the investigation of archaeologists and historians, to whom it is necessarily of much importance.

THE POPE'S WEALTH.—If more wealth could prolong the days of an ailing octogenarian, Pope Pius IX. would have little reason to be apprehensive of his approaching end. Huge strong boxes laden with gold and precious stones not unfrequently pass through the Italian custom-house on their way to the "Apostolic captive." The Holy Father has, so the story goes, little cups and saucers lying on his writing-table before him filled with unset gems of great value, out of which he occasionally takes little pinches to give as presents to his most favoured attendants and visitors, making as free with the glittering baubles as if he were merely dispensing pinches of snuff. Well may he dispense with the 3,200,000 francs allowed him by the Italian nation, and well may he afford to refuse the additional 400,000 francs recently voted by the Italian Parliament to defray the expenses of the Heads of Religions Orders. The Pope is rich, enormously rich, richer than he ever was when he disposed of the revenue of his ill-governed State. The treasures which reach him from all the communities of Europe and America are unbounded, and whether the givers and receivers of all this wealth like it or not the "ungrateful populace" of Rome are none the worse for it.

The Dowager Marchioness of Lansdowne has claimed the title, honour, and dignity of Baroness Nairne, in the peerage of Scotland, the claim having been heard by the House of Lords and adjourned

Should the marchioness establish her claim to the title it will devolve at her death upon her second son, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice.

ANOTHER PETRIFIED GIRL.—A young girl at Alton, la., is beset with a strange malady. It consists of the hardening of the skin and flesh; her body feels like a marble statue, but she has suffered no loss of sensibility or muscular power. A great many girls can claim equal affinity to marble; it goes deeper even than skin and flesh.

THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE continued illness of Mrs. Steinberg requiring constant attention, she occupied a chamber by herself, out of which opened a small bed-room assigned to Claudine Duval, who certainly proved herself the most careful and devoted of nurses.

The physician employed by Nicolaus enjoyed the highest reputation. Dr. Julius Bolman was celebrated in Berlin before he came to this country. Here he had added to his fame and was rapidly acquiring a fortune.

The case of Mrs. Steinberg puzzled the man of skill. He saw that she possessed a good constitution, he could not see that she was suffering from any well-pronounced malady, and yet that she was sinking gradually was a fact but too apparent. Certain nervous symptoms indicated that her trouble was mental and moral rather than physical; but how could he minister to a mind diseased—pluck from the memory the rooted sorrow—when he could not read the hidden secrets of her heart?

At last the condition of his patient seriously alarmed the good doctor, and one day she fixed her pleading eyes upon his face and asked, plaintively:

"Doctor, do you think I shall get well?"

"You have a great deal of latent vitality," he answered. "Providence sometimes works miracles when human science fails. Yet it is my duty to tell you that if you have any unarranged matters pressing on your mind, any dispositions for the future to be carried out, you had better see to them at once."

"I thank you, doctor," said the invalid. "Your hints do not alarm me. I have long known that my situation was critical. Will you be kind enough to see Claus before you go, and will you tell him that I wish to speak with him?"

"Certainly, my lady. And be assured that all the resources of my skill are at your service. I have felt it my duty to warn you, knowing your resignation and strength of character."

"Again I thank you," said Linda, and the doctor took his leave.

He found Nicolaus in the back part of his shop at his work bench, for he still preferred to execute delicate jobs with his own hands.

"Well, doctor, and how did you find our patient?" asked the jeweller, looking up.

The doctor took his hand.

"My good friend," he said, "I do not despair, yet I am obliged to tell you that your wife is dangerously ill."

Nicolaus Steinberg covered his face with his hand and sobbed audibly.

"Be a man," said the doctor. "She wishes to see you, and you must control your emotions for her sake, as well as your own. Good-morning, I will look in again this evening."

After a few minutes Nicolaus went upstairs into his wife's chamber. He sat down by the bedside and took her hand.

They offered a painful contrast—the wife worn to a shadow, almost as white as the spotless linen that adorned the bed, the husband, much her senior, entering indeed upon the period of old age, yet hale and hearty, with every promise of many years of usefulness yet before him. Strange dispensation that she should be called first.

"My dear Claus," she said, firmly and gently, "you have seen the doctor?"

"Yes, darling."

"And he told you?"

"He told me what has alarmed me," returned Nicolaus, averting his head.

"That we may have to part soon. Do not grieve, dear Claus. This earthly career is a brief pilgrimage to the longest-lived of us. Who of us is so happy as to regret the hour when the burden is lifted from the weary shoulders? I have sent for you to tell you that which will lighten your grief when we part. I am impelled to tell it, though the confession may drive you from my side—may make you hate me."

"Her mind is wandering!" thought Nicolaus.

She read his thoughts in the expression of his frank, handsome face, and smiled sadly as she said:

"No, Claus, I am not mad. I am in the full possession of my faculties. I think I have been mad to

hide my secret from you so long. But the hour of hesitation is past. One to whom I promised secrecy—one who has gone before me—will doubtless release me from my oath and permit me to make a death-bed confession."

Astonishment and dread had now full possession of the jeweller. What had his wife, whose every thought he believed that he shared, been hiding from him through so many years of married life?

"It is a solemn hour," said Linda, folding her hands, "and we two are alone standing on the verge of the valley of the shadow of death. No ear but yours will hear what I have to say."

The invalid was mistaken.

Just before the doctor's visit, while Mrs. Steinberg was asleep, Claudine had passed through the chamber into her own. She had listened and heard all that the doctor said, and she was still listening breathlessly. Her door was so near the bed that the slightest whisper was audible.

There would, therefore, be two witnesses to the confession.

"Twenty-two years ago," commented Madame Steinberg, "when you made me your wife you would have made me the happiest of women had there not weighed upon my heart the secret I am about to disclose. That secret has been my punishment and torture, has embittered almost every hour of my married life and is pressing me down to a premature grave."

She paused a moment and then continued:

"I deceived you from the beginning of our acquaintance."

"Do you tell me that you never loved me, Linda?" asked Nicolaus.

"Never loved you! I worshipped the ground you trod on; I revered you."

"I was so much older than you it was as an elder brother that you looked on me. That is what you mean to tell me."

"No, no, not that. I looked on you as a lover, as a husband."

"And yet you deceived me?"

"And yet I deceived you. The very name under which you married me was not my own. Linda Meyer was not my name. You thought you were my first love, but my name was Linda Warbeck, for I had been already married."

"And with another husband living you dared—"

"Stop, Nicolaus, do not suspect me of that. I was a widow—a child wife, a child widow."

"And why did you conceal this?"

"Because my first marriage had loaded me with sorrow, shame and infamy. I was a mere child, not knowing my own heart, knowing nothing of the world and its wiles, petted by my widowed mother, when a man named Franz Warbeck became a temporary inmate of our house. This man was beautiful, but it was the beauty of the fallen archangel. His tongue was smooth and flattering, his discourse plausible. In him I saw the ideal of a young girl's dreams. I loved or thought I loved him, and I believed him worthy of my love. My mother thought otherwise. Her experience of life, her maternal instincts enlightened and alarmed her. She saw the influence this man was acquiring over me. She refused to keep him in her house, and she extorted from him a promise that he would abandon me. From me too she exacted a pledge that I would give up all thoughts of him. Had I been true to that promise all would have been well. Had the man been true to his I should have been spared a life of sorrow."

"But he sent me a letter, so seductive, so pathetic that I gave him a clandestine meeting. At that meeting he pleaded his love in the language of irresistible eloquence. He dwelt on my mother's injustice to him when only her prejudices guided her, for she knew nothing against him. He urged me to consent to a secret marriage with him. I became his wife, while still living in my mother's house. I met him secretly, and more than once introduced him into my mother's house. I even gave him a key by which he could obtain an entrance."

"My mother, as you know, though not rich had some property. She was the widow of a gallant Prussian officer, worthy to be his mate, for she had the courage of a man. One night she thought she heard a noise in the dining-room closet, got out of bed, took my father's pistols, which she always kept loaded, crept downstairs and opened the parlour door."

"Two men were there, with black crape on their faces. They had filled a bag with valuable plate, and were just preparing to escape with their booty, when my mother confronted them. One of the villains levelled his pistol at her, but it missed fire. She instantly covered him with her weapon and sent a bullet through his body. He fell with a curse upon his lips, while his accomplice dashed past her and escaped through the front door of the house, which was unlocked."

"I went to my mother's room and found her bed unoccupied, and rushed downstairs in search of her. On entering the parlour what a horror was reserved for me. The wounded robber had risen from his feet and torn the mask from his face, revealing the features of my husband!"

"You are a good shot," he said to my mother. "and the world will say I have deserved my fate, for I am a professional burglar."

"I suspected you," replied my mother, "when you were an inmate of my house."

"I have done some things that you didn't suspect," gasped the wounded man—"such as marrying your daughter."

"Is this true, Linda?" she asked, in a voice of agony.

"It is true," I answered. "This man is my husband—and I must bind up his wound."

"I shall never forget my mother's looks and words."

"If you approach him," she said—"if you touch him—if you exchange a word with him, I will renounce you, curse you, and then, with this weapon, take my life. Choose between your mother and this felon."

"The wounded man dragged himself toward me."

"Linda," he said, "will you stay with this woman or will you share my fate?"

"I shrank from him and clung to my mother for protection. Never shall I forget the look Warbeck gave me, it was the look of a fiend."

"You think to break my heart," he said, with a sneer. "Pretty fool! I never loved you. You were my plaything of an hour—my unconscious tool. But now I hate you. I leave you with that murderer to enjoy her love and to write under your dying husband's curse."

"He dragged himself to the door, my mother making no opposition to his escape. She followed him and watched him go down the outside steps, clinging to the iron railings, walk a little way down the street and fall heavily on his face on the footway. Then she saw two men start out of the shade and bend over him. One of them said 'Dead!' They took up their heavy burden and disappeared with it. This she told me afterwards, for when she came back to the parlour she found me in a swoon. When I had recovered I told her my whole pitiful story and implored her forgiveness. She gave me on one condition, that I would never reveal the secret of my ignominious marriage and widowhood—she required of me an oath to that effect. That oath has appeared to me sacred and binding until lately; but I have prayed and reasoned, and my conscience has told me that to go out of the world without acknowledging you would be a greater crime than to violate that pledge."

"We removed to Frankfort after this terrible tragedy. You saw me—loved me—and I was proud and happy. For the first time I felt what true love was, and saw how my heart had betrayed me when I fancied that I loved Warbeck. You were so frank and open that I read your heart before your lips spoke, and I anticipated your proposal. Then it was I implored my mother to permit me to tell you my sad story. But she said it would be a wrong to my dead father's honoured memory, and it would bring down her gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. This is how I came to you with a false name and hiding a shameful secret."

"You should have told me," said Steinberg. "Your mother had no right to require your silence. You should have told me."

"Yes, dearest, I should have told you," said Linda, sobbing; "and then I should never have been your wife."

Steinberg bent over her and folded her tenderly in his arms as he imprinted a kiss upon her pale cheek.

"Do you know me so little, do you think so poorly of me," he said, "as to imagine that I would have abandoned you because you had been imprudent—because you had been deceived, and had suffered? No! had the whole world known the story I would still have claimed you for my bride."

"Ah," said Linda, "now I feel how unworthy I am of you—how noble, how great you are. But I have not told you all. The secret that I thought was known only to Warbeck, my mother and myself, that, when my mother died, was in my sole keeping—that secret that I dreaded to expose was in the possession of a bad, unscrupulous man—an accomplice of Warbeck's—one Cesar Bastian. Do you remember the last night we spent in the Kursaal at Homburg, when Hermann came over from Heidelberg to meet us?"

"Perfectly well."

"Do you remember Hermann telling you he saw me give money to a shabby beggar?"

"Yes."

"That man was Cesar Bastian, and I was buying

his silence. That man drained me—impoverished me. He it was to whom I gave my watch."

"The scoundrel shall pay dearly for his persecution of you. I'll scour the face of the earth but what I bring him to justice."

"He is beyond the reach of earthly justice," said Linda, solemnly; "for the Carl Wolff lost with the children in the 'Snow Cloud' was no other than Cesar Bastian."

"And you knew that!" cried Steinberg.

"Only too late—only from the photograph which Christian sent me."

A long pause followed, while Linda was recovering her breath after her long narrative, and her husband was pondering over what he had heard.

At last the wife said:

"Nicolaus, when I am gone promise me that you will not brood too much over my loss. You are young in health and strength, if not in years, and have many years of happiness before you. I do not wish you to lead a lonely life—I wish you to marry again."

"I marry again if I lose you! Never! never!"

"I have thought of it," said Linda, "and I think it will be best for you. Will you forgive if I say that I have thought you yourself had been reflecting on the possibility and had made a choice?"

"Oh, Linda, how can you be so cruel? I speculate on the chances of an event that would destroy all my happiness in life! I dream of your successor! Surely, my darling, your brain was bewildered when your thoughts ran in this channel."

"Yet the person I thought of is so beautiful—you have been so generous and attentive to her."

"To whom?"

"Claudine Duval."

"Poor Claudine! Yes, she has had a hard life, and I love her almost as much as if I were her own father, chiefly for her devotion to you."

"Clara," said Linda, "you do not know how happy you have made me! You do not know how you have lightened my heart by listening to me so kindly and forgiving me so nobly. What a mistake my whole life has been! Or, rather, how it has been embittered by one fatal error! I feel now as if I could sleep quietly. Don't be alarmed. Lately I have only been able to sleep from the effect of medicine—now I think I can do without it. Kiss me again before you go."

Nicolaus pressed her hand kindly, and touched his lips to her white forehead.

"I will send Frederika or Claudine to watch you while you sleep," he said and went downstairs.

The door had hardly closed on him when the invalid dropped into a quiet sleep.

Then Claudine stole out of her room and went softly downstairs without being seen by anyone.

She heard every word, knew how the secret of Bastian's connection with Madame Steinberg, and that his power was gone with her voluntary disclosure of her story, and she had discovered too that the supposed attachment of the jeweller to herself was only a dream of her own vanity.

If the jeweller were a widower to-morrow she would be as far off as ever from his heart and fortune.

"Listeners never hear any good of themselves," says the adage, and in this case what Claudine heard was sufficiently discouraging.

Frederika was sitting by her mother's bedside when Dr. Bolman joined her.

The doctor appeared surprised when the young lady informed him in a whisper that her mother had taken no medicine, and that her sleep was spontaneous and natural.

He waited till she woke, then felt her pulse, looked into her eyes, and asked her a few questions. She said she was free from pain, only unaccountably drowsy. Doctor Bolman wished the ladies good-night and took his departure without leaving any prescription.

When he met Nicolaus Steinberg at the foot of the stairs his expression was more cheerful than in the morning. As he pressed the jeweller's hand he whispered but one word:

"Hope!"

A thousand words would not have been more eloquent.

CHAPTER XX.

"Du hast Diamanten und Perlen!" What a charming melody that is when it flows from the red lips of a pretty German frau, but how it grates on the ear when it is grunted out by an execrable hand-organ.

And it was the crank of one of the vilest of these instruments of torture that was pitilessly turned by the hand of a sturdy fellow in voluteen, with a huge black beard covering a face shaded by a slouched Tyrolean hat, in front of Mr. Steinberg's house the

morning after the confidential interview between man and wife.

The fellow finished Stigelli's song, and was beginning to murder Lindpainter's "Standard-Bearer," with plans of assassinating the "Watch on the Rhine" to wind up with, when Claudine Duval made her appearance on the door-step.

"There is a lady ill in the house," said Claudine. "Your noise disturbs her. Take this and go farther up the street."

She held out a coin and the itinerant musician went close up to her to receive it—so close that his ugly black beard almost brushed her smooth pink cheek.

"Follow me, Claudine," he whispered, in French. Claudine recognized the voice, nodded and went into the house after her hat and shawl.

Coming out again directly, she walked slowly up the street, stopping to gaze into shop-windows whenever the organ-grinder halted, unslinging his instrument and tortured a tune.

In this way she tracked him, without appearing to do so, and saw him go into a small brick house that stood by itself.

After a little hesitation she went to the house, and before she could ring was admitted by Cesar Bastian.

"You're welcome, my girl, as the flowers in May," he said, kissing her cheek as he led her into a small room, where they sat down on a sofa. "Well, how is your invalid?"

"Yesterday morning she was thought to be dying, to-day the doctor says she is mending."

"Ah, then, you want my help."

He took a small vial from his vest pocket.

"Ten drops of this in a glass of water will be the best medicine she can possibly take. Ten drops of this will make Nicolaus Steinberg a widower. Ten drops of this administered to the old man by the hand of his second wife will make her a widow. But this second dose must not be administered, of course, until the said Nicolaus has executed a will making over all his property, with the exception of a decent provision for his children, to his second wife. You see, Claudine, I insist on that, for if he leave all to you the children might break the will. We mustn't be too grasping."

He sat there with one leg crossed over the other, holding his deadly vial in his hand, and talking as coolly of taking two human lives as if they had been two animals to be got rid of.

Claudine shuddered inwardly.

"Put up your poison," she said, "I don't need it."

"What! are you going to let her get well? What good will that do? Do you think I can worry any more money out of her?"

"Not a penny, for she has made a full confession to her husband, and they are on the best of terms. I overheard them."

"She didn't mention my name?"

"Yes, she did though. She told Mr. Steinberg how you had persecuted her, and he threatened to hunt you down until she informed him of your alias as Carl Wolff, and how you had perished at sea. It will be a bad job for you to reveal your existence."

"I see. But why are you so indifferent about this woman's living?"

"Because I overheard more than I have yet told you. I actually overheard this woman recommend me to her husband as his second wife, and learned from his own lips that nothing would induce him to marry me. He loves me as a daughter, etc. Very good of him."

"Then all your schemes have come to nothing, my poor girl?"

"All that scheme has, but not all my schemes. I shall yet marry into the Steinberg family."

"What do you mean?"

"There is the son, good enough for anybody, handsome, educated. I have determined that he shall be my husband."

"Not so!" cried Cesar, with a savage oath.

"Rather than you should marry him I would kill you, I forbid the bans. I was willing you should belong to the graybeard for a time, till you had secured the property, on condition of getting rid of the old dog as soon as he had enriched you, but I swear you shall never be the bride of this young man."

"If I admitted your right to interfere in my affairs, to dictate to me as if you were my master and I your slave, still I should be at a loss to guess the reason of your opposing so eligible a match."

"Can you not guess?" asked Cesar, in a milder voice. "Have you not read the secret of my heart?"

"I never knew you aspired to the honour of keeping a heart," she answered, with a touch of contempt.

"Beware!" said Cesar. "Those who seek to make sport of me find it a dangerous game. When you re-

vealed the glory of your full-blown beauty then my heart declared itself to me—then I knew what love was."

"For the first time?"

"For the first time. I swear it."

"Yet," said Claudine, "I thought I heard the name of a girl—Marcelline, was it not?—mentioned in connection with you a short time ago."

Bastian's brow darkened.

"I thought I loved her," he said, in a low tone.

"And you showed your love for her!"

"Yes—I did," said Bastian, fiercely. "I showed my jealousy, and jealousy is a certain proof of love. She accepted my presents, promised to be mine, and then took up with another man. I decided that such perfidy deserved death, and shot her."

"It was exceedingly unfortunate that the girl was the daughter of a French detective," said Claudine. "I have heard something about that affair, but you can set me right if I am wrong. I heard there was no legal evidence of that crime, but the old detective swore that he would hunt you to the death."

"I defied Jacques Renard to do his worst—and I defy him still. The ocean rolls between us."

"It is traversed by swift ships."

"Pshaw! you can't frighten me, Claudine, if that's your purpose. Touching this projected marriage—"

"We will say no more of it, since it is so very distasteful to you. I thought the plan was a good one."

"But you haven't answered my offer."

"It came upon me so suddenly—so unexpectedly, Cesar. It fairly took away my breath. You see we were always like brother and sister—for many years I really thought you were my brother. Then we were separated so long that we became like strangers again."

"But you don't reject me—you give me hope?"

"It would be very cruel in me to deprive you of hope," said Claudine, evasively.

She looked very fascinating as she spoke.

"Claudine—I love you to desperation!" said the man. "Mine you will be if you have any mercy in your heart. But if not mine—never another's. If I am satisfied you love another man, I'll kill him or you, or both. Remember!"

Claudine waited to hear no farther threats, but left her old accomplice to his solitude.

When the girl was gone Bastian pondered deeply over one thing she had said:

"The ocean is traversed by swift ships."

"The girl is right," so ran his thoughts. "There may be danger. Yet I am an adept at disguise, and have foiled the sharpest detectives without their being able to recognize me. Still there is one proof of my identity which must be destroyed. I have hitherto shrunk from it like a coward, but I will do it now before it is too late."

He took a small box from a drawer of a table, opened it, drew forth a large bottle containing some liquid, a quantity of fine linen torn into strips, and a short flat bar of steel. Then he put his fingers in his mouth and gave a peculiar, shrill whistle.

A villainous-looking old woman made her appearance.

"Is it me you are calling as if I was your dog?" she snarled out.

"I employed the mode of communication we agreed upon, my dear Madame Bertrand," said Bastian, blandly. "I certainly meant no offence."

"Well, what do you want?"

"I want you to bring me a pan of lighted charcoal."

"If you want to get rid of your life and cheat the gallows, you shan't do it in this house. Do you suppose I'm going to have a coroner's inquest here?"

"Why, do you think I'm going to smother myself with charcoal fumes? I'm not tired of life yet, you absurd creature. I want the fire for another purpose."

"You ain't going to melt gold here either," said the woman.

"Pshaw! You shall see what I'm going to do—nothing to compromise you. There, my good woman, go and get the coals for me."

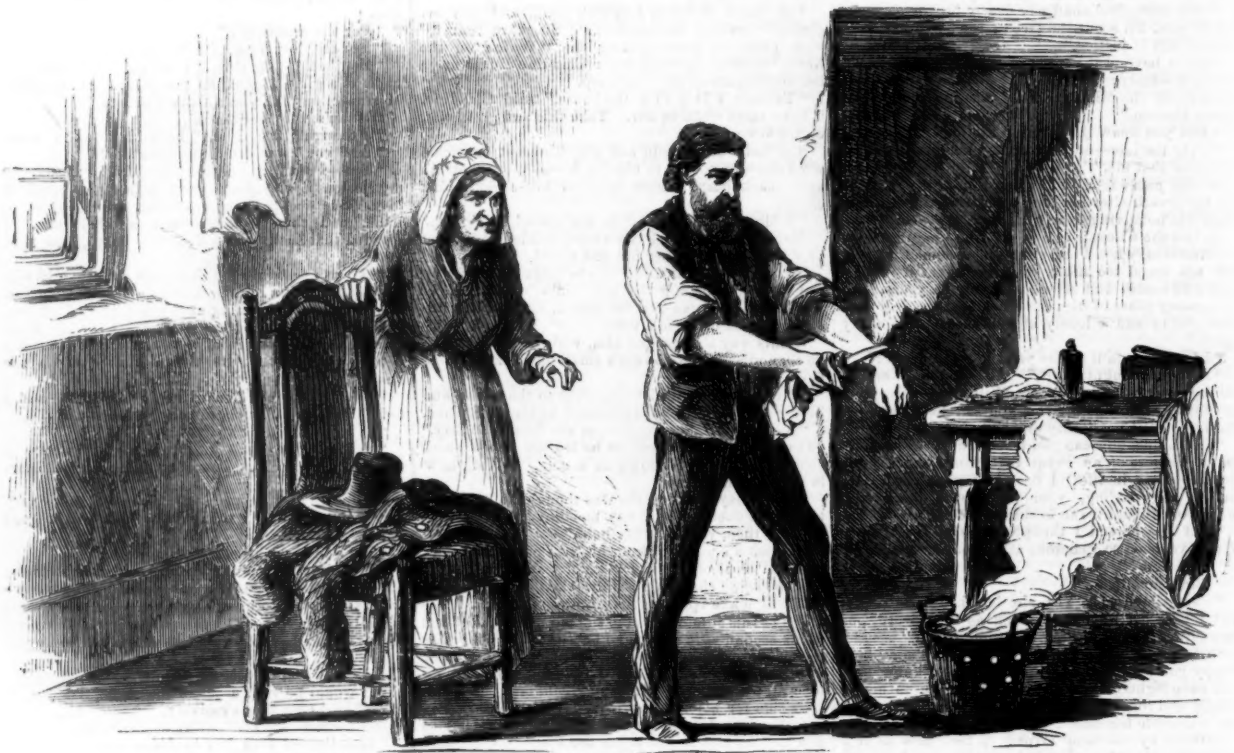
"I'm not a good woman, but I'll get what you want."

The woman's curiosity was excited and she hastened to do the errand.

When she came back with a pan of live coals she found Bastian had removed his coat and rolled up his shirt sleeves.

He locked the door, sat down, took the bar of steel, after wrapping one end in a thick towel, then thrust the other into the centre of the bed of coals.

Then it was that Madame Bertrand noticed indelibly marked upon his right arm, just above the wrist, an anchor surmounted by an imperial crown and the initials C. B.



[DESTROYING THE BRANDING.]

When the bar was white hot Basian took it in his left hand and moved it over the tattooed flesh backward and forward until he had effaced the marks and left in their place a ghastly wound.

The operation was exceedingly painful, yet as the burning flesh hissed under the biting steel and a white steam rose from the arm he kept his composure, though his face was pale and his teeth were clenched hard.

Afterwards he heated the iron again, and taking it in his right hand applied it to his left wrist, producing a burn of the same size and form as that on the right. He had given to both these brands the form of a star.

"You are a brave boy," said the old woman. "Hold! I must kiss you for your courage."

"Now," said he, "you can do me a service, madame. Saturate some strips of cloth in this liniment and bind up my wounds. In a few days only the scars will be left."

We now return to the Steinberg family.

The rapid recovery of Linda surprised Dr. Bolman as much as her illness had perplexed him, and gave him new and discouraging ideas of the inadequacy of science. As for the jeweller, Hermann and Frederika, their joy was boundless.

Before this happy event the young man had been gloomy and reserved, but his melancholy was attributed to anxiety on his mother's account. None but himself and the Falkensteins knew what cloud had overshadowed his young life.

Now, when he smiled, jested and was himself again, his father and sister were sure their former conjectures were correct, and attributed his present gaiety to the convalescence of his mother.

Certainly this had much to do with it, for he idolized his mother, but there was yet another reason for the change. Flora Falkenstein had cast him off. She had believed him guilty of a base crime, and had treated him with scorn.

Then, he argued, she never could have loved him. Had she done so she would have clung to him, though all the world believed him guilty—though condemning evidence was heaped mountain high against him. His pride demanded that she should say, in the words of the poet:

"I know not, I ask not if guilt's in thy heart,
I know that I love thee whatever thou art."

But no! at the first breath of slander she had eagerly discarded him. She had accepted tacitly the homage of his heart only to crush it and fling it away like a worthless thing in the hour of his sharpest trial.

He must now be a man. He must tear her image

from his heart though a part of life itself were sacrificed. He thought he had done so. He thought he had schooled himself not only not to love but to hate her when he caught sight of her one day coming toward him in the street.

As she drew near a faint blush overspreading her cheeks indicated that she had seen and recognized him. But her eyes did not meet his. Her face assumed a hard, pitiless expression, her lip curled in scorn, and, gathering in the skirts of her dress, as if she feared the contamination of his touch, she swept past him, cruel, cold, inflexible. He dared not address her, he saw it would be hopeless.

The cruel beauty went her way proudly till she reached her father's house. Her lofty demeanour never relaxed till she had reached her chamber. There, closing the door, she flung herself upon her knees and clasped her hands in agony.

"Heaven have mercy on me!" she moaned. "I shall go mad. That man, who walks at liberty, thanks to my father's clemency—who should be in a prisoner's cell—that man, I love him still!"

The thoughts of Hermann, on the other hand, were bitter and exasperating.

"She is not a woman," he thought, "she has no touch of feminine nature. Clemency, charity, the jewels in a woman's crown, she has them not. I will show her that though she has wrong she cannot break my heart."

It was in this mood that he went home. The first face that met him was a welcome contrast. It was that of Claudine, wreathed with smiles. Never before had she appeared so beautiful in the young man's eyes. Indeed, preoccupied with another, he had never before noticed how extremely beautiful she was. Now he gazed on her so admiringly that the colour—and Claudine could summon up blushes or tears at will—mounted to her cheeks.

"As modest as she is beautiful," thought Hermann.

They sat down in a little back parlour at the open window.

The sunlight flickered among the vine leaves without, and the light breeze that stirred the blossoms of a monthly honeysuckle wafted a breath of perfume into the sitting-room.

"You have been taking a walk," said Claudine, "and it has brought a little colour to your cheek. I am glad of it, for you have seemed very poorly of late. I have felt quite anxious about you."

"So it seems there is some one to waste a thought on such a very poor creature as I am."

"Why do you undervalue yourself and worry your friends, Hermann?" asked Claudine, the ready tears

filling her beautiful tears. "You know how dear you are to—to all of us," she added, with some confusion—"your father, mother, Frederika—"

"And Claudine?"

"Have you not been almost a brother to me?" And the beautiful bright eyes were raised to his face.

"Yes, I thought I loved you with a brotherly love," answered Hermann. "But I think so no longer."

"Oh, what have I done to offend you?"

"Nothing. Offend me? You have given me your sympathy when my heart was heavy-laden. Oh, Claudine, you know not how I have suffered. I thought I loved a person worthy of my love—Flora Falkenstein. The opportunity of testing her love came. I cannot explain to you what the occasion was. I will only say that her father believed me to be an unworthy person. She snatched at his version of the affair to insult, scorn and discard me. This morning I met her in the street. I would have spoken a word to her, but she passed me with a glance of scorn such as only the vilest of the vile deserve. This creature thinks she has broken my heart. But she has only opened my eyes. I know now that I never loved her."

"Poor Hermann," sighed Claudine.

"No, not poor, but rich beyond the world's wealthiest if you will only take pity on me."

"I?" exclaimed Claudine, with well-feigned astonishment.

"Yes, you. Now I can read the riddle of my own heart. What I mistook for brotherly affection was love, true love. I might hide my secret longer, but my fiery nature will not brook delay. Claudine," he continued, grasping her hand, "if you cannot love me I will leave home, friends, all, and hide my despair from every friendly eye. Claudine, do not tell me that you cannot love me. Give me a little hope. Tell me that in time you will try to love me a little."

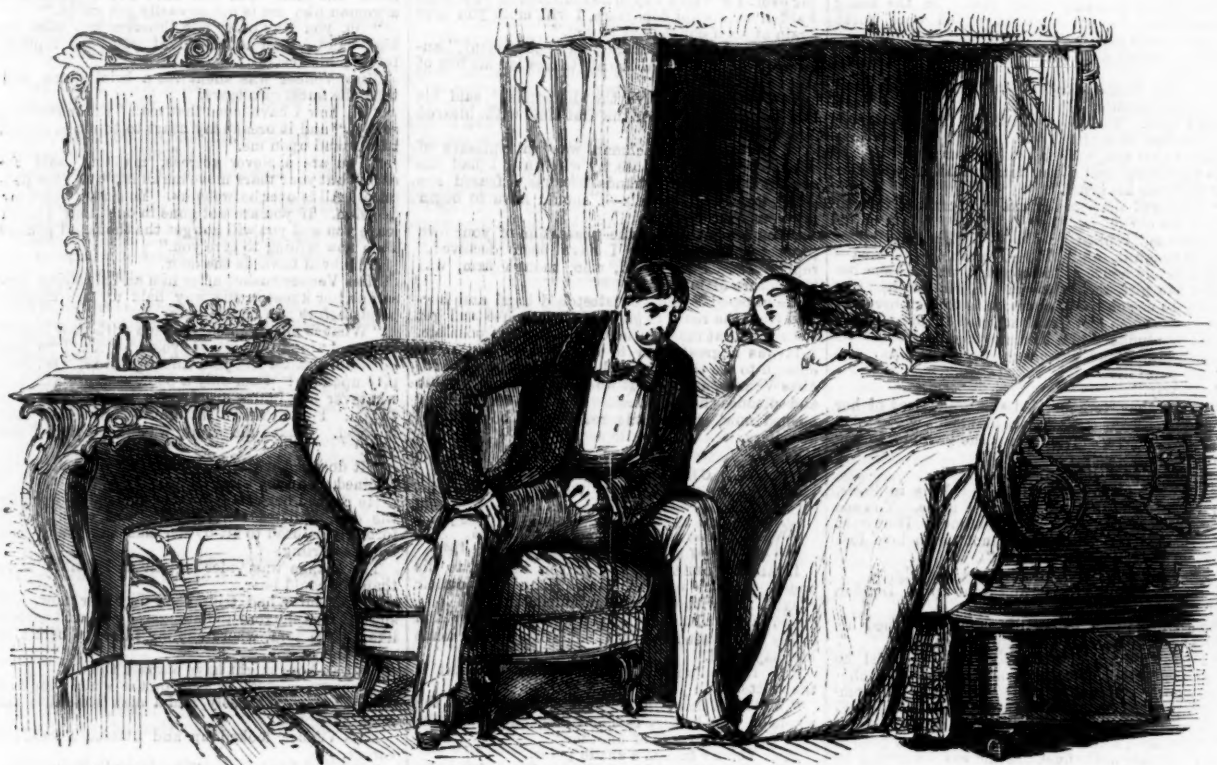
"Hermann, dear Hermann," exclaimed Claudine, "I have loved you all along."

And while her cheeks burned with blushes she hid her face on the young man's shoulder.

He clasped her passionately to his heart and kissed her burning brow. Her little hand lay imprisoned in his, and he pressed it to his lips with fervour.

A step was approaching. She sprang to her feet, pressed her fingers to her archly smiling lips, and disappeared through the opposite door as Nicholas Steinberg, suspecting nothing of this tender love-passion, came into the room.

(To be continued.)



[A REVELATION.]

THE FAMILY DIAMONDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Marigold," "Breaking the Charm," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The gates of mercy shall be all shut up.

Henry V.

When princes meet astrologers may make it
An ominous conjunction, full of boding,
Like that of Mars with Saturn. Old Play.

MISS VENNER was inconsolable at the loss of her cherished diamonds, and at once sent for the Parisian police, to whom she gave an account of the robbery, dwelling upon the immense value of the jewels and offering a large reward for their recovery.

When Lord Sunderland returned from the club he found her half beside herself with rage and grief.

He heard the story with a considerable amount of indignation to think that his wife should have been robbed in such an impudent manner.

Her loss he considered his own, and as the diamonds were worth an enormous fortune he felt himself poorer to the extent of their value.

She went to rest in an hysterical condition, and his lordship sat in an armchair by her side to attend to her as well as he was able.

While in this excited state Miss Venner, regardless of the presence of Lord Sunderland, talked to herself in a dangerous manner.

"You have done this, Frank!" she exclaimed. "I can see your hand in the robbery, but your triumph shall be of short duration. As Heaven hears me, I will have a terrible revenge. You shall never boast that you have gained your inheritance and are the possessor of the Burgoyne diamonds. I would die first."

His lordship listened attentively.

"There is something more in this than appears upon the surface," he muttered.

"Oh! what an idiot I was ever to love such a scullion being!" she continued, in a tone of deep feeling. "But I will crush you, Frank Burgoyne; you shall not enjoy your triumph long."

Her lips closed, and she breathed heavily, while her arms, which had been tossing restlessly about, hung motionless over the bed.

"Pretty arms," said his lordship to himself, "and what a delicate skin! She is a peerless creature; but she has a secret. Why should she talk about Frank Burgoyne? why connect him with the diamonds? I must fathom this if possible."

He remembered that in the course of conversation that evening Frank Burgoyne had at the club let

fall several peculiar remarks about his wife, which he was at a loss to understand at the time, though he did not doubt they had their hidden meaning.

It was also in his recollection that Miss Venner had objected very strongly to his going to meet Mr. Burgoyne instead of accompanying her to the opera.

These reflections affected him greatly.

Owing to the large income he had inherited at the death of a relative, he was perfectly independent of the woman he had married, but even if she still had the diamonds in her keeping he would not have hesitated to break off all connection between them if he found that she was unworthy of him or had been in any way deceiving him.

"You were speaking, my darling," he said, trying to get her to resume her remarks, "you were saying something about Frank Burgoyne."

This name connected the snapt thread of her thoughts, and she was immediately agitated again.

"Yes, yes," she cried, with an hysterical laugh, "I see it all now. It is as clear as daylight. Frank got my husband to go to the club this evening so that I might go alone to the opera and return alone. The coachman was his creature. He has the jewels. But he shall not keep them. Oh! how I curse the first moment I ever saw the Burgoyne family and learnt to love such a craven."

Her excitement brought on another accession of hysterics, and breaking off her remarks she continued to laugh and cry and think at intervals until, thoroughly exhausted, she fell back on the pillow and went to sleep.

Very gravely did Lord Sunderland sit by her side, pondering over her incautious words and watching her every movement to see if she was likely to speak again.

He had not heard enough to give him the key to the mystery of his wife's life, yet quite sufficient had reached his ears to render him miserable, suspicious and uneasy until he heard more.

His vigil was not rewarded as he could have wished, for Miss Venner's slumber was tranquil and undisturbed and she did not utter another intelligible or connected sentence.

When the gray dawn of early morning was stealing in through the windows his lordship, thoughtful and somewhat worn by watching, quitted the apartment and throwing himself upon a bed in a spare room slept until his valet found him and informed his master that it was past eleven o'clock.

Having gone through the operation of dressing, Lord Sunderland inquired for his wife, and was told that her maid said that she had had a bad night and had not yet risen.

"If Lady Sunderland ask for me," he exclaimed, "let her know that I have gone to breakfast at the club and shall not return before dinner."

He knew that he should find Frank Burgoyne there with the Count de Grenelle, as they made the circle their headquarters, so calling a fiacre he drove to the Place de la Concorde, and discovered Frank in the reading-room, looking over the pages of that enterprising print the *Figaro*, which is usually the first to publish any scandal or item of news that happens in Paris.

"Ah, Sunderland," exclaimed Frank, who had regained his good-humoured, chatty air, "sorry to hear of your wife's loss. The *Figaro* is full of the great diamond robbery."

"I want to talk to you about that," answered his lordship.

"To me?"

"Yes. My wife seems to think you know something about it."

"Undoubtedly I know something about the diamonds, my dear fellow," answered Frank, "considering they are my property."

Lord Sunderland stared at him in amazement.

"It is time you and I had an understanding," continued Frank. "Shall I tell you a little romance in real life? Have you time to listen to it?"

"By all means."

"Very well. Sit by my side at this window. We shall then be uninterrupted. No one is likely to listen to our conversation, but I don't care if people do. My acquaintance here is confined to De Grenelle."

Lord Sunderland, with a lively curiosity depicted on his countenance, took a chair which Frank Burgoyne placed for him in a perfectly unembarrassed manner, and the two men faced one another.

"Now, sir," he exclaimed, rather haughtily, "I am at your service."

"And I at yours, count. How shall I begin? There was once a young lady whom I will call Belladonna, because she was beautiful and at the same time deadly in her nature and disposition."

"Belladonna," repeated his lordship, abstractedly.

"Does the name displease you?"

"Not in the least."

"Good," returned Frank. "At the same time there was a young man of good family, who singularly enough was called Frank. Belladonna obtained the situation of governess in the family of Frank's father, and did the young man the honour to fall in love with him."

"Did he return the passion?"

"On the contrary, he loved another. Belladonna began to plot against him. His father had married

twice; his stepmother hated him. In the house were kept the family diamonds, which were worth a quarter of a million."

"Diamonds! did you say diamonds?" asked his lordship.

"I did. Belladonna so contrived matters that the diamonds should be stolen and the blame fixed upon Frank. The shock killed his father, but before he died he declared that he had given the diamonds to his son, who had only taken his own. It was very grand and noble, he saved his son's honour but he broke his heart."

"By Jove! that was grand. He must have been one of the old school."

"He was," replied Frank. "Well, my namesake had to rough it, and Miss—I mean Belladonna—took a lonely house in the country, whither she beguiled the girl Frank loved. Here she had the cruelty to use chemical compounds to turn her skin black. She also had Frank accused of robbery, and by threats induced him to marry her."

Lord Sunderland became ghastly pale.

"Do you follow me?" asked Frank.

"Clearly."

"When they were married she grew tired of her husband. It appears that the diamonds were stolen by her brother, a convict whom she gave up to the police."

"Is he in servitude now?"

"He was; at the present moment he is in Paris, having been liberated on a ticket of leave. You see I am confidential. The fellow's name is Dingwall. As you may imagine there is not much love lost between his sister and himself."

"Go on!" cried Lord Sunderland, eagerly.

"Belladonna left Frank and went up to London and married a peer of the realm."

Something like a groan of anguish escaped his lordship, who seemed profoundly affected.

"Fortunately Frank escaped with the girl he loved from this wicked woman. He met the chemist who had turned the loved ones into the semblance of a negro, and he restored her to her original condition. He also had the charge of robbery set right, and, hearing that Belladonna had gone to Paris with her noble husband and the diamonds, he followed her, first of all to recover his property, and secondly to revenge himself upon a perfidious woman who—"

"Pardon me," said Lord Sunderland. "If I understand you rightly your namesake was really married to this woman?"

"Oh, yes."

"There is no doubt about that?"

"None whatever," replied Frank.

"Then the peer's marriage would be void on the face of it, for Belladonna made a bigamous marriage?"

"Undoubtedly."

His lordship drew a deep sigh of relief.

"I have found your story interesting," Mr. Burgoyne," he exclaimed. "But I have one fault to find with it."

"What is that, if I may ask?"

"You have said either too little or too much. This name Frank appertains to yourself."

"You have guessed rightly," said Frank, with a half-smile.

"And the woman?"

"Is the soi-disant Lady Sunderland, really Mrs. Francis Burgoyne, née Venner."

"Good Heavens!" cried his lordship. "Pardon my agitation, this is a great shock. I was not altogether prepared for this."

Frank gazed pityingly at him and waited for some minutes in silence until he spoke again.

"I believe every word you have told me, Mr. Burgoyne," at length said his lordship, "because I have heard something during the night which corroborates your words. It seems to me that I have but one course open to me."

"And that is?" queried Frank.

"To dismiss the woman who under false pretences has taken my name, to drive her away from me with ignominy and in disgrace. Yet Heaven knows I have learnt to love her lately and fancied she loved me."

"Here is the affection of the snake who bites the breast that warmed it into life," returned Frank, bitterly. "Her love is the shade of theupas tree, which poisons all who take shelter beneath its branches."

"You are right."

"Act bravely," said Frank. "As Heaven hears me I have told you the simple truth in all its naked hideousness. The woman is my wife, yet I naked her dead before me without shedding a tear or feeling the least emotion."

"I cannot say I thank you. The patient suffering from disease is grateful to the surgeon for curing him, but he shudders while the knife is being used."

He seized his hat.

"I will go at once," he added. "These things should not be trifled with, they will not bear think-

ing over. I will give way to no sentimental weakness. Pardon my abrupt departure, I will meet you here again at six if convenient to you."

"Certainly. I will make it an appointment," answered Frank. "But above all things let me beg of you to be firm."

"Of course you have the diamonds," said his lordship, looking up for the first time with bleared and haggard eyes.

"I have. The coachman was an emissary of mine. I could not expose my wife until I had the property in my own hands because I feared she would fly with the jewels—I should have to begin my work over again."

"You are entitled to the possession of your own property. How cruelly I have been deceived," replied Lord Sunderland, who, though firm, was the picture of misery.

He grasped Frank's outstretched hand and hurried from the room to go to his own house and get the scene that must ensue over as soon as possible.

It was a great blow to him, but he had sense enough to see that he could not live any longer with Miss Venner, and that it would be best to expose and dismiss her at once. His eyes were fully opened now, and he was resolved to be firm and merciful.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Rescue or none, Sir Knight, fate your captive—
Deed with me what your dubious suggests;
Thinking the chance of war may one day place you
Where I must now be reckoned—in the role
Of melancholy phantasies. *ANON.*

LORD SUNDERLAND was driven rapidly to his house, and he entered Miss Venner's boudoir roughly and without being announced.

She saw in a moment from his clouded brow and firmly compressed lips that something unpleasant had happened.

"In Heaven's name!" she exclaimed, "what is the matter with you?"

"You shall hear," he replied. "I have heard the whole of your history this morning, and am aware that you are the wife of another."

Miss Venner turned a shade paler.

"Yes," continued his lordship, "you have deceived me all along and have no right to my name or title. You are an impostor, that is one comfort, and in truth the only one left me."

"Has it occurred to you that you will have to prove this?" she asked, without trying to shirk the question or deny his allegations.

"Proof will be easily forthcoming."

On the contrary, it will not. I have destroyed all proof, and your informant, whom I do not doubt is Mr. Frank Burgoyne, might have been candid enough to inform you of the fact."

"Do you deny that you are Mr. Burgoyne's wife?"

"I admit nothing," she answered.

"Will you pretend to say that your brother is not a convict?"

"Make what allegation you like."

"Or that you have cruelly persecuted Mr. Burgoyne and a young lady named Agnes Waldon in a manner that makes you answerable to the law?"

"It is for you and my enemies to prove all that you advance," she replied, boldly. "When I heard that you were friendly with Frank Burgoyne I expected this attack. It does not take me by surprise. But at least you might know one thing."

"What's that?"

"I have only loved you," she said, tenderly.

"That's a matter of indifference to me now," he exclaimed, coldly, "for all the affection I thought I entertained for you has completely vanished."

"With the disappearance of the diamonds I suppose," she replied, with bitter sarcasm. "While you thought I had valuable jewels, worth a quarter of a million sterling, which could be turned into bank notes whenever you might want money, I heard nothing of this sudden disappearance of affection."

"The loss of the diamonds has nothing to do with it."

"Oh, Frank Burgoyne aimed well," she said, "when he had my diamonds stolen, for of course he is the thief."

"How can he be a thief when he only has taken what is his own?"

"Perhaps the police will have a word to say to that when I put them on the right track."

"Nonsense," said Lord Sunderland, angrily. "The man shall not be interfered with. You are exposed, madam, and I give you one hour to quit this house."

"Suppose I refuse?"

"Then I shall put an end to my tenancy at once, and go this evening to—to, say, Vienna," replied his lordship.

"Am I to be turned out penniless?"

"No. You shall have a cheque for your expenses. I will give you a thousand pounds on the understanding that you never trouble me again."

"Thank you for your generosity, Lord Sunder-

land," she said, "but you have got to learn that a woman like me is not so easily got rid of."

"Oh, you may bully and threaten and take the high hand. I am not afraid of you," he replied, folding his arms.

Miss Venner was silent for a brief space, and then she burst into tears.

"Oh, how I have loved that man," she murmured, softly, "and it breaks my heart to think he should turn round upon me."

"You are a clever actress, madam," said the earl, "but your tears move me as little as your defiance. All is over between us. You have heard my decision. If you are not gone in one hour I shall leave you and you will not get the thousand pounds I am now willing to give you."

He moved towards the door.

Miss Venner rushed after him and throwing herself on her knees in his way held up her clasped hands before him imploringly.

"What is money in comparison with your love?" she said, in an agonized voice. "Am I to lose position, wealth, and your affection too? Oh! have pity upon me! I am only a poor, weak woman, and whatever my faults are I have been a good wife to you. I have never thought of any other man but you. What I did wrong was done before I met you."

"It does not matter. You are a counterfeit," he rejoined, in an icy tone.

He pushed her rudely on one side, and, opening the door, quitted the fairy-like apartment where formerly he used to sit by her side and fondly call her his darling.

The change was indeed great and almost more than she could bear.

Her enemies had triumphed over her now, and she felt it as she rose and staggered pale and corpse-like to the sofa, where she lay like one bereft of sense and reason.

Half an hour might have elapsed thus.

There was a stealthy step on the stairs, the door opened again noiselessly, and a man stole into the room on tiptoe.

Miss Venner looked up and uttered a subdued shriek.

"One word and you die!" exclaimed a rough voice, which she knew too well. "We meet again. When you sold me the last time I vowed that when I got my ticket I would come after you and pay off old scores. Dingwall always keeps his word."

Misfortunes never come singly.

She had lost the diamonds, Lord Sunderland had dismissed her with ignominy, and now her brother Dingwall had come straight from the prison to which she had consigned him, thirsting for his revenge, over which he had brooded for many long hours in his solitary cell.

"Yes," cried Dingwall, with a hollow laugh, "we shall square accounts now, Daisy."

"You find me crushed and disgraced," she replied. "It is the worst time you could have chosen for a visit. This house is no longer mine. I have to leave it in an hour's time; yet I am not penniless. I am to have a thousand pounds if I go at once. You shall have half of it."

"It is not money I want this time, Daisy," answered the burglar.

"What then?"

"Your life!"

A cry of dismay burst from the miserable woman, who had not anticipated this.

She expected reproaches and a demand for money, but not such implacable hatred as was displayed in his looks and voice.

"Yes," pursued Dingwall. "I have sworn that I would murder you in return for the many shabby tricks you have played me, and you will see that I mean to keep my word. It is dangerous to play with a reckless desperado, stick-at-nothing jail bird like me, Daisy."

"You cannot mean what you say!" she cried, in terror. "There is some mistake. This is done to frighten me, is it not? It is a bad joke. My nerves are out of order to-day. Don't do it again, please."

Dingwall felt in the spacious pocket of his frisco coat and placed a dagger and a pistol on the table.

"Take your choice!" he said.

The scene was becoming too terribly real now for her to doubt an instant longer that he was in earnest.

Her innate courage came to her aid, and she showed that she was a woman of no ordinary kind.

"Very well," she replied, slowly, her livid lips scarcely moving. "It is useless to beg my life. I would not lower and debase myself by doing so. Perhaps it is best to die since all my plans have failed and all my plots have recoiled on my own head."

"Which is it to be?" cried Dingwall, as calmly as if he was asking a companion what he would drink in a public-house.

"The pistol. Aim at my heart," she answered.

Shrinking back on the sofa, she covered her face with her hand.

Dingwall grasped the pistol, took her measure, and covering her well pulled the trigger, feeling, no more compunction than if he had been going to kill a cat.

There was a flash, a loud report and a puff of smoke—which slowly rolled off toward the window.

Miss Venner was hit, and she rolled off the sofa, clutching wildly at the floor.

The pistol had fallen from Dingwall's hand as he fired the shot.

She grasped it in her agony and tightly clutched the butt end.

"Curse it!" cried Dingwall, seizing the dagger, "I have missed the heart. She is not dead. I must finish my work or—"

He had no time to utter more.

The report had alarmed the household, and the room was instantly filled by the domestics, Lord Sunderland being at their head.

Strong arms grasped the burglar.

"Assassin! murderer!" fell upon his ears.

The man was panic stricken and imagined that he would be led off to the police station charged with murder.

Lord Sunderland knelt down and supported the lovely but deathlike face of the woman he had called his wife.

Her eyes opened for a moment and she held up the pistol, from the barrel of which the smoke was yet lazily curling, showing how recently it had been discharged.

"He is not to blame!" she gasped. "It is my brother. He—he did not do it. I—I shot my—myself. This is sui—suicide. Oh, Heaven! have mercy—"

A rush of blood to the mouth choked her farther utterance, and with a spasmodic contraction of the features and the limbs she fell back dead!

But in dying she had performed the one noble and generous act of her life.

She had exonerated Dingwall from any accusation that might be made against him of causing her death.

"You hear what she says," the man exclaimed. "It is a suicide. Let go of my arm."

Those who were holding him released him; as they had no farther right to restrain him.

The dying confession of Miss Venner had rendered it impossible that any charge in connection with her death could be brought against him.

It was a strange ending to a wild, eventful, wicked life.

They laid her on the sofa, and Lord Sunderland, himself greatly shocked at what had happened, covered the agonized face with a handkerchief.

Dingwall made his way slowly from the room, muttering:

"Daisy did me one good turn at last. I should not have thought it of her."

He made his way into the street and mingled with the crowd ever moving to and fro on the gay boulevards.

No one ever saw him again in Europe, and it was supposed that he had made his escape to the new world, where let us hope he led a happier and better life than he had done in the old.

Miss Venner's awfully sudden death released both Lord Sunderland and Frank Burgoyne from a great deal of embarrassment.

Frank at once sold the diamonds and realized a handsome fortune, with part of which he bought a splendid estate in Hampshire, not far from the residence of Dr. Waldon.

As he was now a free man and had got rid of the dreadful woman who had so far been the blighting curse of his existence, the doctor put no farther obstacle in the way of his marriage with his daughter.

Giles Merriles and his wife were installed in the new hall as butler and housekeeper.

Signor Conti accepted the post of valet to Mr. Frank Burgoyne.

Great preparations were made for the reception of the bride and bridegroom at Happy Vale Hall.

Flags and banners were hung all along the avenue, and the tenantry gathered in vast crowds to welcome the arrival of their new master and mistress.

It was a lovely morning in the month of August when the carriage and four entered the lodge gates amidst the cheers of the spectators.

Lord Sunderland hastened from Paris to be Frank's best man.

"Oh, I am so—so happy, dear Frank," whispered Agnes, as she pressed his hand in a delirium of delight.

"And I, darling," replied Frank, "feel as if I had only just begun to live."

The hall was reached at last.

Agnes went upstairs to remove her bonnet, and Lord Sunderland took Frank on one side.

"They would not bury her in consecrated

ground," he whispered, "but I have had the grave seen to and a little cross erected at the head of it."

Frank nodded his head approvingly.

"What did you put on it?" he asked.

"Sacred to the memory of 'Daisy.' Those who placed her mortal remains in this spot have hopes in the mercy of the Redeemer."

A tear fell from Frank's eye, which he hastily dashed away.

It was a day of rejoicing, and his little wife must see no trace of sadness on his brow.

"You could do no more," he said, grasping Lord Sunderland's hand.

This was the last time Miss Venner's name was ever mentioned amongst them.

In a happy future they forgot the unhappy past.

THE END.

MARRIED IN MASK.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE time had now come for action.

The murder trial had brought under Pryor's keen eyes four men who had participated in a successful burglary upon the premises of his employer. He had known the haunts of three of them for a long time; but he knew that the evidence necessary to convict them was wanting.

He had, however, been watching keenly the events of Sam's trial.

He had seen the long-lost Bessie make her appearance in the court. He knew then that he would receive his second wages, the price agreed upon for tracing out the harp and chain.

But he had beheld something else of importance to him in that court. He had put eyes upon the fourth man of the party who had been engaged in the burglary. He saw, moreover, to his delight that this man was a witness for the prosecution in Sam's case. He saw that his confederate, Old Hawk, sat by the side of Joseph Travers, and evidently assisted him in the defence.

"Then," said the shrewd detective to himself, "the witness for the prosecution has, doubtless, incurred the hatred of the gang, and will work in other matters antagonistic to them. I will try if the offer of my employer's money will not induce him to turn Queen's evidence against Old Hawk and the other two."

Pryor therefore caused the arrest of the four men as they left the court. The officers who made the arrest were already on hand, by his prearrangement. Before nightfall the detective, accompanied by the prosecuting attorney, had gained access to one of them, and before they left his cell the burglar had agreed, for the money and for his own release, to turn Queen's evidence against Old Hawk and the other two.

On the following day Pryor sought the mansion of Nicholas Rudd to claim his fee for the discovery of the harp and chain. He was shown into the private library of the banker by a servant.

"Wonderful man!" exclaimed the banker. "You were perfectly right in your conclusions. The chain and harp in the possession of my son's wife is the identical jewellery I have so long coveted. Here is your compensation which I promised you years ago."

As he spoke Nicholas Rudd handed Pryor his cheque for the amount which had been agreed upon.

"Now," he said, "I wish to employ you in another affair. Listen to me. I will give you a thousand pounds if you will ascertain for me who is the real mother of Bessie. She does not know herself. I have interrogated her closely. Have you skill enough to fathom this mystery for me?"

The heart of the detective leaped up with delight, but he remained silent. His fees were ordinarily earned with such difficulty and labour that he exulted in the opportunity of gaining money with ease. The task now assigned him was no task at all. But he was careful not to announce his real knowledge in the matter. He had acquired his information as to Bessie's parentage through his profession. He would acquire what money he could from information on hand as well as from information yet to be gained. So he accepted the offer of the banker, saying:

"I will ascertain, sooner or later, whose child she really was, and whenever I satisfy you in the matter I will claim my thousand pounds."

"Very well," said Rudd. "That is settled."

And so they parted. But as Pryor descended the stairs the banker called him back.

"I want to have this matter understood perfectly," he said. "If you ascertain for me who Bessie's parents are I am to pay you a thousand pounds."

"That is the bargain," said the detective, smiling.

"But if I ascertain the fact without your assistance?" said Rudd.

"Then you pay me nothing," said Pryor.

"Very good," said the banker. "Now we understand each other."

On the evening of that day the younger Rudd entered the sanctum of his father, and with evident delight handed him a newspaper.

"See," he exclaimed, "we are rid of a very troublesome matter by the natural course of events."

The banker took the paper and read a detailed account of the arrest of Old Hawk and his associates for burglary, and the statement that one of the gang had turned Queen's evidence, which would insure a long residence in jail for the other three.

"That is fortunate indeed," said the banker, as he finished the reading of the article. "I have been meditating upon the best means of ridding you of your complications with that gang. Now they will be put behind heavy stone walls, and you can go your way in peace."

How often have those last five words of Nicholas Rudd whispered their music to the heart of man—Go your way in peace.

Why, that is the culmination of human hopes, to have one's own way and have it in peace. But who has his own way and has it in peace? Who that is born of woman has his own way and has it in peace? Ah! the trouble is that there is no peace in life's pilgrimage. Life is warfare. The grave alone is peace.

Ask the merchant who has denied himself every comfort and every recreation for years that he might accumulate his gold if he has at last the privilege of going his own way in peace. No. He will tell you that there are new impediments in the way he is treading, and the long-expected peace has not yet come.

Ask the zealous, earnest-hearted clergyman, who started in life with the firm conviction that the only true way to secure peace was to devote his life to the service of Heaven and his fellow men, if he has been allowed to go his way in peace. He will tell you no. He will tell you that although he has enjoyed many moments of self-congratulation in the consciousness that he was doing good he has been thwarted in his plans and misrepresented as to his motives until he has been harassed and worried almost to death.

He will tell you that his holiest and purest acts have been ascribed to selfishness, and that, where he really meant to serve Heaven, men in his congregation have misrepresented him as aspiring and ambitious for himself alone. The clergyman will tell you that he has not yet been able to go his way in peace.

Ah! it is the fate of mortals, or it is rather a decree of the inscrutable will, that mortals shall never go their way in peace here. That would be heaven; for sweet and perfect peace is heaven itself.

No! dreamer on the path of life, hope not for peace. Do, while the day lasts, all that Heaven and duty prompts, but hope not for reward this side of the grave. Falter not in well doing, but keep the eye ever fixed upon the sky and the stars, for beyond them is the reward alone for an upright life. Bear the burden of duty and integrity faithfully and without murmuring, for there will be a grand and glorious peace at last.

These are the great reflections and conclusions of the truly great in all ages and in all climes. But because the younger Rudd was inexperienced he knew them not. And so he heard the words of the aged banker "You can go your way in peace" with exultation and without fear of the future. Rescued from vice, saved from the gallows, restored to an honourable career, and married to one who adored him, what could he fear? Full of these comforting reflections he left the aged banker and passed into the private parlour in the suite of rooms assigned to his young wife.

He found her seated on a sofa, in profound meditation. The golden chain and harp, which had never left her possession from earliest childhood, was in her hand. She told him, in response to his question, that she was thinking of the jewellery, and of the time she had wandered hand in hand with him, along the cheerless streets.

"You always said, Sam, that this jewellery must have come to me from my real parents."

"Yes," he replied; "and you must never part with it, for it may some day be the clue by which your parents, if living, will find you."

"How strange it seems," she said, thoughtfully, "to be your wife and yet never to have known my own father and mother. I have awake some nights and think about it. The past is clear to me only so far back as the fearful scenes in that shanty. Before that all is dark to me. My life seems to have begun just there, amid scenes of terror."

The young wife clung closer to her husband as she recalled the days of suffering. There seemed to be a strength in him upon which she would gladly lean. He had always been her ideal of strength, manliness and valour.

After a pause, in which they both reflected upon the vicissitudes of their respective careers, she said:

"Do you believe in the supernatural, Sam? I mean do you believe in revelations which can be explained on no scientific principles?"

"What do you mean, Bessie?" he said.

"You remember that I told you, Sam, I knew everything that transpired around me when I lay in that death trance?"

"Yes," he said. "You knew everything that we said and did."

"I saw more than I ever told you yet, my husband."

"What?" exclaimed Sam.

"My spirit," she said, "seemed to be isolated from my body and to hover over it. It seemed to be poised in the air above the corpse. I felt that I could not withdraw far from my body, that some mysterious attraction drew me back to it whenever I attempted to glide away. I thought once that I had flown far away from my body. It seemed remote from me as if it lie in a room far, far below me, indeed at a great depth from me. At this time my powers of vision seemed wonderfully enlarged. The whole world appeared to lie beneath me as a great map. And then I witnessed a strange occurrence. I saw in the holy land two beings who were talking of me. Something whispered to me that they were my father and mother. They were undefined in figure, still I could see them. Presently one of them died, and I could see his spirit leave the body and ascend toward me. It was my father. He came upward till he passed me. He struggled to reach my spirit, poised in the air, but something drew him away from me and carried him far, far away above me. Then I saw him no more. But I could see my mother in the holy land of the East alone. As I gazed downward at her to make out her features a sharp pricking in the body I had left below me in the room reached my spirit and I felt like lightning into the casement of my body again and awoke from the trance. Was it not strange? Ever since that time I cannot shake off the impression that my mother lives and is in the East."

This statement of the young wife as to the enlarged vision of a spirit in a trance state will not surprise medical men who have given the subject of suspended animation their attention. It is possible that the impressions made upon the mind of Bessie in early life by the presence of her parents became obscured in the course of many years of absence, and were again partially restored by the existence of her consciousness in an isolated condition from her body.

It is the experience of most persons that ideas and scenes long forgotten spring to life again without any known cause. They come trooping up from the misty confines of childhood without any suggesting cause, and at the strangest moments. This experience, whatever the solution or explanation may be, might have been the same in the case of Bessie when inanimate.

But the greater marvel in her case was her vision of new events in the present thousands of miles away. She not only recalled, in the trance state, the vague outlines of her parents, but she witnessed the death of one of them in a far-off land, of which occurrence she could have known nothing.

There was in this case, therefore, no old impression of the past to be rehabilitated or revived in her mind. It was a new event grasped by her spirit from her enlarged powers of vision when in the trance state.

On the same evening, while Bessie was disclosing to her amazed husband the visions of her trance, Pryor, the detective, was lurking about the wharf in search of a party of river thieves who had been for a long time plundering the lumber yards. The rascals were suspected of stealing by night, and carrying off their booty in small boats. The detective had been employed to watch for and identify them if possible.

He seated himself at last in the moonlight behind a huge pile of boards, and waited for their arrival from the river side.

All was silent in the immediate vicinity of the lumber yard.

He fell at last into deep meditation upon other matters in which he was interested professionally. His thoughts ran thus:

"I am sure of a thousand pounds the moment I expose to Nicholas Rudd the real parents of his daughter-in-law. I have plenty of time to do that. If I appear to devote a long time to this investigation Mr. Rudd will value my services higher, my professional skill will be augmented in his eyes. But I have been employed by Mr. Thorne to ascertain where his adopted daughter has fled. I know that secret also. But I will not gratify these two wealthy employers yet. I have the solution already to both the problems. I will wait and ponder the subjects. I know also where Mr. Truelove's lost child is. I withhold from the father this valuable information simply because I don't know where to write to him. I have then the required information for all three of the fathers—the real father, the adopted father, and the

father-in-law. What a mine of wealth this little girl will be to me when I satisfy all three of her fathers. Already I have the information for all three. I can take my time to impart the information. Mr. Truelove should know first, as he is the real father. I cannot reach his ear just yet, so I will remain silent—there is plenty of time!"

Detective Pryor, admirable and efficient spy, do you realize the magnitude and import of those words you have just spoken to yourself, sitting in the moonlight?

Plenty of time! A wife who has deserted her husband because of words kindly spoken—words not meant to wound, but only to show the imprudence of a married woman continually associating with a man a stranger to her husband—thinks that she has plenty of time to atone for her faults. One who has erred cannot seek forgiveness and reconciliation too soon. That husband, maddened by his injuries, may at any moment close his life by his own hand! or the pistol of the man who has wronged him may terminate his career at the very moment when the estranged wife is thinking of reconciliation, and intends to seek it, but defers it for the present, because she has plenty of time. Perhaps at the very moment when the memory of other days has at last melted her heart, and made it throb again with affection for the man whom she swore to love and respect, the electric flash reaches her with the startling intelligence that she has no longer plenty of time—that her miserable husband has passed to a better world, unexpectedly, suddenly, not allowed a second in which to breathe out the divine word, Forgiveness!

Plenty of time did you say, Detective Pryor? Who has plenty of time? What mortal has abundance of time? Who regulates the affairs of men? What says to the heart "Throb one night longer and then for ever cease to beat"? And can you, oh, perishable man, crafty in your profession and faithful to your duties, measure exactly the importance of each duty and the time you have to do it in? No.

As the patient watcher sat there alone in the moonlight he reflected upon the joy his intelligence would one day bring to the hearts of Bessie's parents.

How would the poor mother gaze upon the beautiful young wife who had been the petted child. How difficult would it be to realize that the young woman who stood before her was the same darling who had been stolen from her in all the sweetness and innocence of childhood!

As the detective pondered these matters on his lonely watch he heard the sound of oars moving on the gunwale of a boat in the river.

He crept to the end of the pile of boards against which he had been sitting, and peered out cautiously towards the water.

He could see nothing yet. The river was silvered by the moon, and the spars of vessels were visible on the opposite side of the stream.

Presently a man, whom he recognized as a watchman, came out from behind a row of barrels, and seemed to gaze at something upon the water.

Then this watchman hailed a rowboat that was moving cautiously up the stream, and ordered it to stop.

An oath was the only response to his summons, and the two men, who were now plainly visible in the boat, pulled more vigorously at their oars.

The watchman threatened them with a bullet if they did not come ashore. The oarsmen held on their way.

Then the sharp crack of a pistol rang out upon the night.

The oarsmen jeered at the result. The ball had gone wide of its mark.

Then one of the men in the boat took in his oars. Immediately after a shot was fired from the boat.

The bullet missed the watchman, but struck the unfortunate man who had "plenty of time."

He was peering out from behind the pile of boards, and his person was partly exposed. The ball passed through his right lung.

He fell to the ground, and unnoticed, the watchman passing on up the shore and firing shot after shot at the outlaws.

The detective, who a short time before had been congratulating himself upon the abundance of time he had to make his revelations to his three employers—the three fathers of Bessie—now realized that he had little time to live.

He was alone and the blood was flowing rapidly from him.

He tried to call succor to him. His voice reached no human ear. He saw that he was to go upon the last journey without a friend to clasp his hand and receive his dying commissions.

He could not summon his relatives. He must bleed and die alone.

But in his dying moments Pryor the detective was faithful still.

He remembered that although life and its hopes were over for him others lived whom his knowledge could make happy.

His duty was not all performed yet. He could serve his employers perhaps a little before he died.

He turned over upon his side, and, with great difficulty, drew from his pocket a scrap of paper and a lead pencil.

He caught the end of a plank, and drew himself near to it, and wrote this message, as he supposed to the living:

"MR. TRUELVE.—Your lost child, Bessie, is the daughter-in-law of the great Nicholas Rudd. She has the harp and chain. I am dying.

"Your faithful PRYOR."

The paper fell from his hand and a smile passed over his face.

"He will say that I am a faithful fellow if ever this paper come to his hands."

He repeated the words over and over again, as if to die in the act of duty was a comfort to him. Then he said, as his voice grew weaker from the loss of blood:

"Oh, Father, have mercy upon me. I never have defrauded any man but tried to do my duty. Have mercy upon me, for I shall soon come into Thy presence."

For three hours died the poor man lie there dying. He was lying in a pool of his own blood. The moonbeams fell full upon his countenance, but no one passed by to see him.

As he grew weaker and weaker toward the close he was whispering prayers to the Great Father of all.

At last there was no more death rattle in his throat and he was motionless and growing cold. The great detective who had unearthed more stolen goods and given to the prisons more criminals than any other man in the metropolis had gone to his last account.

He died in the discharge of duty, and his last worldly thought was for his employers' interest.

After a time the moon hid herself in the western clouds and it was dark. The wind arose and finally blew a gale.

The little fragment of paper upon which Pryor had left the last evidence of his fidelity was lifted from the ground by the wind and carried away from his motionless corpse.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE fragment of paper containing the valuable intelligence was carried hither and thither by the wind. It was wafted first under a pile of lumber, where it clung for an hour to a splinter, flapping in and out at the caprices of the gale.

After a time the wind increased in violence so that the vessels in the river rocked under its influence. Then came a mighty sweep of the blast and detached the paper from the splinter. It glided away a few feet and then turned over and lay with the writing next to the ground. Presently it turned up on edge; a whirlwind catching it, caused it to rise, spinning round and round as it went up. It reached a great altitude and then began slowly to flutter downward. It had nearly reached the earth when a side wind struck it and it went sailing far away northward over the tops of chimneys and roofs.

Away, away it flew, sometimes rising, sometimes falling, until it reached the cupola of a church. Here the wind lulled and it slowly fell upon the balcony railing just beneath the cupola. Would it remain here?

After the lapse of an hour the wind turned it over again and then blew it clear of the church. It fell slowly, slowly fluttering until it rested in a butcher's wagon. Here it lay until daylight.

With the early dawn the butcher's boy emerged from a stable near at hand and attached the horse to the wagon. He mounted then to his seat, took the reins and drove away through the streets.

He had driven a mile from the church when he paused before a meat market, alighted and commenced to bring out from the shop baskets of meat for delivery in different quarters of the city. He noticed a fragment of paper in his wagon, and seeing that it was blank, the writing being under, he picked it up and threw it out into the street. It fell upon the pavement with the writing upon it downward.

Here it lay unmolested until the afternoon, when a boy, who could not read, passed across the street, saw it, picked it up, turned it over, and saw the writing upon it. He could not comprehend it, and thought it worthless, like other fragments of paper he had seen about the streets. He walked on with it, however, and twisted it about his finger thoughtlessly. He had forgotten all about it, and walked on for half a mile. Then he saw a straw bed burning in the street and a group of boys around it throwing into the burning pile sticks, shavings and other combustibles which were scattered about.

He looked at his finger and saw the fragment of paper twisted around it.

He unrolled it, spread it out, and threw it at the fire.

Before the flames could catch it a sudden gust of wind carried it over the heads of the boys, and they shouted to see it whirl away through the air. It sailed upward and was tossed about by the wind until they lost sight of it.

It was only a scrap of paper, what did they care about it when it was gone?

Of what possible use could such a worthless trifle be? Ah! there was one desolate heart to which that fragment of paper would be like a perpetual glance of sunlight, an everlasting warmth if she could only look upon it.

There was a desolate and aged mother, far away from the metropolis, who would almost faint from excess of joy if she could only be granted the privilege of looking upon that fragment of paper which the boys had shouted at and then scorned when it had fled on the wings of the blast.

These things which are trifles to the crowd are oftentimes the whole life of one being. That flying scrap of paper was of vital importance to a lonely mother.

Why did not some pitying angel dart downward from the clouds, grasp it, and bear it to the hands of Mrs. Truelove?

Alas! she knew not, the aged and lovely woman, that tidings of her lost Bessie were floating in the air above the great metropolis.

At any moment that record of the dead man's fidelity might be destroyed. Fire might scorch out the blessed intelligence that her child, her darling, still lived. The winds might bear it into the river, where it would float away to the great ocean and be lost. Any beggar might catch it as it fell and rend it into pieces, which the gale would scatter. It bore the sweetest tidings through the air that paper ever bears to the human heart. It told a mother how to regain her stolen child. It was the clue to the sweet pink lips, the lovely eyes, and the silky hair of a mother's darling. But the paper was fairly frolicking in the gale, as if no human heart was passing the weary years in agony.

It soared, and fluttered, and whirled away like a merry fairy who had gone out to enjoy a gala day in the wind, and was coquetting with some elfin king who sought to grasp her in her capricious flight.

Away, away over the housetops of the rich and the poor sped the fragment of paper which had escaped the dying detective's hand.

It came at last to a beautiful girl, who had climbed to the observatory of her father's house, and had opened one of the windows to look upon the river.

There she stood gazing in delight. The wind blew roses into her cheeks and lifted her abundant curls, toying with them. Then her eyes caught sight of the fragment of paper wafted toward the conservatory.

"Oh! it is a letter from my lover!" she exclaimed, in merriment. "Come here, pretty little paper, and tell me how he is, and when he is coming to me."

She held out her pretty hands coaxingly at the paper, which fluttered capriciously over the chimneys and seemed really to come intelligently towards her. Then came a freshening of the gale and the fragment of paper darted straight for her outstretched hands. She caught at it, missed it, and exclaimed, petulantly:

"There you go, you coquette, into the street."

She was right. The paper flew away over the roof and settled slowly downward toward the thoroughfare where vehicles were rattling noisily along.

Slowly now fluttered the precious messenger down into the street.

Before it reached the pavement, however, an elegant carriage with coachmen and footmen in livery drove past.

A lady was seated inside upon the back seat. On the front seat inside was only a basket full of invitations to a party, which the lady was distributing among her friends. As her head was turned to one window looking out, the little fragment of paper was wafted into the opposite window and alighted under the edge of her basket. She did not see it; and there lay the tidings of a lost child just under the receptacle for invitations to a grand entertainment. Upon that paper was the name, Bessie, and the elegant lady, who was riding at her ease there, had known and loved that very child under the name of Bessie Thorne, now so mysteriously lost to her adopted father.

The fragment of paper paused with the vehicle before many superb mansions, and then passed on again through the streets. The lady did not see it—this record of a darling child. It was cunningly concealed under the edge of the basket, and would doubtless have been discovered at last when the lady

reached her own door and the basket was removed from the front seat. But fate had reserved the little messenger for other hands than those of Bessie Thorne's friend.

There came suddenly a blast of martial music. Drums beat and there was the glitter of steel at the street corner.

The spirited horses plunged, turned suddenly, and the vehicle was thrown upon its side. The lady and the basket were overturned too. The fragment of paper fluttered down amid the wreck and was lying now beside another corpse, the dead friend of Bessie Thorne.

The policemen scoured the horses and assisted in lifting out the dead.

The carriage was righted again. The basket was restored to its place. The invitations would have to be changed. The expected guests would be startled by invitations to a funeral.

A policeman, seeing the fragment of paper in the broken carriage, and noticing that it was only a scrap, threw it out into the street. The writing was on the other side of it, and escaped his observation.

Then a beggar passed by, after the tumult was over, and picked up the paper. He read it and said to himself:

"Who are these parties? Who knows but this may be of use to somebody one day?"

So he thrust it into his pocket and went his way. Thus at last the little messenger from the hand of the dying detective had reached, after miles of travel and exploits innumerable, the possession of one who imagined it might be of importance. Possibly the spirit of the dead man had followed it in its wanderings, and was at peace only when it fell into the hands of one who might convey to the family of Mr. Truelove the important fact that Pryor died faithful to the trust reposed in him.

The beggar walked on, and spent his day as usual in the solicitation of alms. When he saw that the shades of evening were at hand he turned homeward.

He plodded along the streets, carrying a greasy bag in which were deposited the proceeds of his day's begging. He paused at length under a street lamp. It was now dark, and he was glad to sit on the kerbstone and discuss some of the cold morsels in his bag. He ate until he was satisfied and then tied up his bag for the young mouths that were eagerly awaiting his return at home.

While still seated under the lamp he drew from his pocket the fragment of paper and studied the writing again. He was puzzled what to do with the scrap. Finally, as he pondered the matter he saw a lad approaching, and determined to consult him.

He hailed the boy as he passed near the lamp.

"I have nothing for you," said the lad.

And he was about to go on his way, when the beggar said:

"I don't want money, boy. I only wanted to have you read this paper for me. I found it. Is it any good?"

The lad took the paper and after reading the words upon it said:

"It is of no use to you. It might be of importance to the detective office."

"Oh! I'm not a-going to trouble any of those gentry," was the response of the beggar. "What'll you give me for it, now? Come, make me an offer."

"I'll give you sixpence for it," said the lad. "I don't believe it's good for anything. But then it might turn out to be worth something, and I'll risk that amount on it. What do you say?"

"Done," said the owner of the bag. "I'll sell it for that money. Fork over your tin."

The money was produced, and when the man had it firmly in his grip he chuckled at the simplicity of the boy.

"Much good may it do you," he said. "Those detectives at the office are too well posted on me to make it safe for me to visit them. You may do better."

The lad walked away in deep study of the writing on the paper. When he reached the next lamp-post he paused and re-read the words of Pryor.

"Strange!" he said to himself. "I know I have heard something about this Bessie some time in my life, but when or where it was I don't remember. Confound it. It seems to me like an old dream of years and years ago. What did I hear once about some Bessie? Well, it's no use trying to remember now. It has passed from me. But the first time I read it I seemed to have heard about it before."

He walked on and carried the paper in his hand. His curiosity was aroused. Something seemed to whisper to him: "You knew about this matter once."

At last, finding that his memory was treacherous, he thrust the paper, after folding it, into a pocket of his vest, determined to reflect upon the subject at some future time.

When he reached his home he had forgotten the

matter entirely. He was a clerk, and his father was an officer in the metropolitan police. The family occupied an entire floor in the second storey of a tenement house. Upon entering the suite of rooms he found his mother, a healthy-looking Irishwoman, well advanced in life, engaged in the preparation of the evening meal. Everything about the woman, the children, and the apartments, indicated scrupulous neatness and comfortable circumstances. The lad was the idol of the family, and was well educated. There were two sisters older than himself, flushed with health, and busily occupied at a sewing-machine. They greeted their brother pleasantly, and some witty conversation ensued between the trio. Then he took in his lap a third sister, some ten years of age, and entertained her until the evening meal was served.

The salary of his father, together with his own, was amply sufficient to keep the family in ease, but the whole tribe was industrious. The mother had educated the children in every household duty. Each child contributed something to the general comfort. When supper was ended the girls cleared away the dishes and the debris of the meal, and then the table was covered with a red cloth for the great luxury of the evening. This was purely an intellectual treat, this home luxury enjoyed between supper and bed. The mother took her seat at the head of the table, with her knitting needles and yarn in hand. The three girls drew chairs to the table and passed pleasant remarks upon the treat so near at hand.

All was silence when the clerk took down from a bookcase the favourite volume and began to read.

It was one of the happiest family circles in the whole city. The only absent one was the father. His duties in the police gave him but three nights of the week for the society of his family.

(To be continued.)

THE OTHER LOVE.

"It does for you to be sentimental," remarked Laura Bellair.

She was leaning back in the phaeton, faultless as to attitude, looks, dress. She had but one rôle, which she played to perfection. Evidently this rôle was not the sentimental.

"I don't call it sentimental," said the other occupant of the pony carriage, "to require to be the first and only object of a man's love whom you mean to marry."

"It is perhaps even a little weaker," was the terse reply; and then the two drove on in silence for a few minutes.

They were well contrasted. Perhaps Miss Bellair realized this fact in choosing Katherine Pennell for her friend.

She was dark, vivacious, clever, without visible means of support, living in the best society, and dressing like a duchess on her Aunt Erskine's cast-off clothes.

Katherine Pennell, the heiress, was fair, calm, indolent, and full of aspirations. She did not understand very much about Laura, except that she had become a fixed fact in her existence; that she dined and drove and shopped with her, day after day; that she played and sang entertainingly, and would dress her hair, contrive a toilet, or decorate a room, with consummate skill, and that she was on the whole "nice."

It was a lovely road along which the two girls drove through the perfumed air of the June morning—a road winding upward around a green tree-covered hill.

The hill was long; the pony was used to it; he settled his head to his task; Miss Pennell let the broad white reins within her small gloved hands lie loosely in her lap while her dreamy blue eyes assumed a far-away look, as though searching for, perhaps, a solution of the problem which vexed her soul.

Silence was not Laura Bellair's forte. She began to sing:

"Life is real, life is earnest,"

rippled melodiously from her red lips.

"Isn't it?" suddenly inquired Katherine.

"Is not what?" Laura asked, rather startled, with no notion of the assertion she had sung.

"Is not life—our life—real and earnest? Do we not live grandly and usefully?" said Katherine, with as much scorn as she was capable of in her tone.

Laura yawned.

"Well, Kate, I think we live fairly. I don't know of any resources which I keep hidden in a napkin. We do no great harm, unless to those masculine victims who are so well able to take care of themselves. We enjoy ourselves tolerably as we go along, and whether our lives are failures or successes will depend upon the sentence of that unspiritual god, Matrimony."

"That is true," answered Katherine, with a sigh. "For my part I wish I had more to do."

"Tuck and frill and ruffle your tresses."

"I am not sure that I shall need one. Anyway I should be happier with harder work." "I daresay you think so. Folks always think the shadow is better than the substance—till they've tried it. But what is the matter to-day? Hadn't you good news by the last mail?"

"Mr. Rosselyn was well when he wrote."

"Well, and of course happy, or the fault was yours. When is he coming home?"

"He did not speak of returning; in fact his letter was very brief. One of the party was just starting for home, and will bring me a package, I suppose." "One of them? Which one?" inquired Miss Bellair, with an interest which was almost sharp.

"Grosvenor was the name. How hot it is, getting."

"Not David Grosvenor! Surely, he doesn't belong to that exploring party? I gave him credit for more sense than to be baking and freezing and starving and sickening on the other side of the world, when he might be enjoying himself at home."

"Do you know David Grosvenor?" Katherine asked.

"I have tried to. He is rather too deep a sea, himself, for me to dredge in with comfort."

"He has been ill with sun-stroke; that is the reason of his return. Charles and he are old friends."

"Ah! Charles can't hold a candle to him, begging your pardon."

"There is no need of doing that."

"Perhaps not. Perhaps you will see it just as I do."

"That is doubtful," was the reply, and a quick colour rose in Katherine's fair face. You know my feelings on that point, Laura. You know I think love a very sacred thing."

"Yes, so an Egyptian thinks a cat. It is only a question of enlightenment."

"I hope never to be enlightened."

"You make a great mistake. All you need is a substantial shock which will show you reality. You see one side of the subject so morbidly that you don't know your own mind."

"I know my own mind. It is the mind of another which I don't feel sure of."

"Folly! What a pity you didn't live in the age of knight-hood, so that you might test Rosselyn's love by throwing your glove in a den of bears, or whatever they were, and letting him venture his life to prove his devotion."

"I would not do that, but I would not object to some sort of test for the man to whom I meant to entrust my whole happiness."

"Test of what?"

"His truth, perhaps."

"What could Charlie Rosselyn have told any lies about?"

Katherine was silent. She was thinking to herself of the vehemence with which her lover had protested that he had never loved a woman before herself. She could not tell Laura Bellair what exquisite satisfaction it would give her to prove that this was the truth.

Laura did not feel ennobled by her friend's declining to answer.

"There is some compensation," she remarked, "in knowing that one can be wooed only for one's own sake."

They had reached a point where the road was narrow, a steep descent on the left, a steeper ascent on the right, around the base of which the pony was plodding, with head down-dropt. The reins still lay loosely within Miss Pennell's grasp; her eyes were cast down in abstraction.

It was Laura alone, ever-vigilant Laura, who saw the danger coming at a sharp canter around the sudden curve in the steep road, coming full at them—a man in light clothes, riding with a tight rein.

Before her perception of danger was shared by either of the participants—by either Katherine or the pony—Laura made a nervous snatch at the reins and jerked the pony's head up.

There was never a mongrel but had its mean whimsies somewhere latent; the pony was no exception to the rule. He felt the strange hand tugging at his bit, his lazy paces disturbed, his nerves agitated. He reared, he whirled. The phaeton trembled on the very edge of the bank. Laura screamed, and Katherine turned her eyes upward in mute terror towards the rider's face.

To spring from his saddle had been an instant's work.

He stood at the pony's head just as the little beast kicked himself free of the shafts, and made off with plunges and snorts.

The new impetus had dislodged the phaeton from the edge of the bank.

"Jump!" screamed Laura; "we are going over." And she sprang upon the seat.

But Katherine could not stir. Except for a faint purple ring around her mouth she looked tranquillity itself.

Having missed his hold upon the pony's bit, the gentleman, with desperate strength, seized one of the wheels and stayed the descent of the phaeton, as it partially turned over, rolling the fair occupants on to the ground.

Laura was up first.

The gentleman had gone to Katherine—they always did. Her wrist was strained a little, that was all the injury.

The three looked at each other for a moment, when the gentleman remarked, with some slight surprise and a faint drawl, that he had hoped his first meeting with Miss Pennell would have been more auspicious.

"I do not know whom we have to thank for our rescue," said Katherine, somewhat wonderingly.

"I am David Grosvenor."

"Who has to thank us for the loss of his horse," interrupted Laura, with a laugh.

"Upon my word," said Mr. Grosvenor, with a glance which revealed the fact that pony and horse were alike gone. "Ladies, can you drive me home?"

"We shall be happy to drive you there when we have found Nox," replied Katherine. "He is too lazy to run very far."

A few moments verified this conjecture. Nox, looking much discomfited, returned to his post; the shaft was spliced with a handkerchief, and if Miss Pennell did not drive Mr. Grosvenor home at least he drove her as far as his hotel, where his missing steed was already feeding in his stall, and where, Mr. Grosvenor averred, he had doomed himself to remain until the arrival of his delayed luggage should enable him to present himself to Miss Pennell with pretensions to a welcome.

"What do you think of him?" asked Laura, at her aunt's door.

"I thought he was rather heavy—for the phaeton," was Katherine's reply.

"If you continue to find him 'heavy,' send for me to lighten the burden of entertaining him."

"I will send, without conditions."

"Good-bye."

"Good-bye."

Katherine went home, recounted her adventures and ate her luncheon. Then, by way of repose, she propped an easy-chair in her chamber window, and re-read Charlie Rosselyn's last letter, in which he had told her a great deal about his love, and a little about his scientific explorations, and successes, and concluded with mentioning that Grosvenor was obliged to leave them, and would bring his letters, specimens, and the knick-knacks which he had collected for his fair lady.

Katherine then meditated. She knew Grosvenor by reputation, and despised him. Laura need not say that she had found men to be pretty much alike. Nothing could be more unlike than the Rosselyn she believed in and the Grosvenor she disapproved. Rosselyn had never loved but her, could never love another—as he declared. Grosvenor believed that every heart he won and cast aside redounded to his triumph, as he did not hesitate to confess. He was well matched against Laura Bellair.

Katherine dressed herself exquisitely that afternoon—perhaps to show Mr. Grosvenor, in case he came, how divinely unimpressible she could be.

About four o'clock she went downstairs, and out upon the lawn to inspect the verbenas with which a marble vase had just been filled.

It was a delightful day, the air tempered to a perfect warmth, a world of blossoms like "vials full of odours sweet" to thrill the soul.

Katherine stood beside the vase—so still that a peacock with sweeping plumage stepped close beside her with incautious paws, and a man paused at the gate and enjoyed the picture.

He was a man who believed in enjoyment, who never lost an agreeable sensation through his own fault. He had an easy, elegant air, this man. A thorough-bred worldling, you told, at a glance—a faultless waltzer, a good talker, a pleasure lover.

Having enjoyed the picture, he opened the gate and advanced.

"Rosselyn has taste," was his mental comment meanwhile. "These quiet men who drop their eyes like a priest at the sight of a woman never fail to unearth a beauty for a wife."

Katherine started, with a flush which became her wonderfully, as she recognized Mr. Grosvenor.

"I suppose I may conclude, and without vanity either, that you were expecting me, Miss Pennell?" he said, touching a packet of letters protruding from his breast pocket.

"Mr. Rosselyn has written me that you were kind enough to be the bearer of some despatches," said Kate, calmly, without the slightest approach to a flush this time.

"Mr. Rosselyn is a happy man, or rather will be," said Mr. Grosvenor, with a conventional-sounding sigh.

"I have every reason to hope so," Katherine answered, a little loftily. "Let us walk into the house. You will think my welcome rather a cool one, after all, Mr. Grosvenor."

"Pardon me for saying anything so commonplace as that to be anywhere with you leaves no more to desire."

"I will endeavour to pardon you. I am rather forgiving by nature," was the dry reply.

"Are you indeed, Miss Pennell?" asked the gentleman, in a quite serious tone. "I should judge the contrary."

And he improved the opportunity to make a critical survey of her face.

"You should judge me unforgiving? That is rather inauspicious for a first impression."

"I beg your pardon. It depends upon one's taste. For my part I cannot admire a character which would pardon rather than resent an injury."

"My lot has been exempt from injuries. I really don't know how I should treat them," said the lady.

"Miss Pennell, since we are upon the subject have you ever considered what different views are taken of injuries? what diverse things people mean by injuries?"

"I don't know that I have ever considered. It is quite material, though, that every one should be most sensitive about what one prizes most. Money, honour, literary fame, the integrity of their love—people have such different hobbies."

"I suppose you did not intend that the last should be least in your list?"

"No," she returned, promptly; "perhaps one could not receive an injury more fatal to one's happiness than by having doubts cast on the trustworthiness of one's love."

"Ah, Miss Pennell, that is a delicious epoch when we believe that love is trustworthy."

They had reached the porch, and Katherine turned her clear eyes rather haughtily toward Mr. Grosvenor.

"Those who have outlived that epoch are certainly to be pitied, or perhaps, blamed," she said.

"Or possibly to be congratulated."

Having introduced her guests to the family, Katherine slipped away to look at her letters, despatch a note to Laura, and ascertain that her crimps were intact.

After tea there came a deprecatory note from Laura; she could not come that evening, but would the next.

And fate destined Kate and Mr. Grosvenor to a tête-à-tête till ten o'clock.

She said to herself that she was thankful to be rid of him at last, and yet was a little glad to think that he was coming the next day. As for him he strolled slowly to his hotel, smoking his cigar, the moonlight shifting through the June foliage, thinking he had never seen a finer specimen than this which his friend Rosselyn appeared to have appropriated.

"I am not sure but I want her myself," he said, throwing his Havana aside as he went up the steps.

A fortnight had passed since the afternoon when David Grosvenor had paused at the gate to take in the picture of the smooth greensward, the white vase overhung with dark verbenas; of Katherine, tall, still and statuesque, and the peacock sweeping his splendid plumage past her side.

Katherine sat by the parlour window one evening, in the dusk.

Laura Bellair was at the piano, and Mr. Grosvenor by her side.

Laura sang well. She had poured a world of passion and pathos in the song she had just sung, and silence had fallen within the room after it. Mr. Grosvenor broke it.

"Our friend Rosselyn used to be a poet in his college days; he tells me he has given up romance for reality now, but some little songs he wrote have always touched me. I wish we could set them to some of the airs you sing, Miss Bellair."

"I daresay we might. Do you recollect the words?"

"Not precisely, but I have the manuscripts. I came across them in looking for some papers which Rosselyn wished me to send him the other day."

"Pray get them. That is—if Katherine likes."

"Of course," said Katherine, languidly, jealously wondering meanwhile why Rosselyn should have written love songs, when he had so solemnly assured her that he had never loved a woman till he loved her.

Laura practised while Grosvenor was gone, and

Katherine lighted candles in the back room. He went in there on his return to look for the songs among the contents of a worn portfolio which he brought, and which, having found the songs, he left open upon the table.

Katherine went back to her window seat. Mr. Grosvenor brought the candles to the piano and read the lines, while Laura thrummed with her slim fingers upon her palm to measure off the syllables.

Grosvenor had a rich, sweet voice, as bewitching a thing in a man as in a woman. He made the most of Rosselyn's lyrics, endowed them with a sentiment and rapture which they scarcely contained.

Then Laura sang, like the actress she naturally was, and Katherine looked steady and straight without the window into the silver lake with which the June moonlight flooded the lawn, feeling, for the first time in her life, miserably jealous.

Grosvenor left early that evening, and while Mr. Pennell and Mr. Erskine were discussing turnip seed the young ladies, with arms about each other's waists, walked the length of the parlours to and fro.

"What did you think of those songs, Laura?" asked Katherine, bluntly, at last.

"Very good," was the concise reply.

"But I mean of Rosselyn's having written them?"

"Oh, as for that I never gave him credit for so much imagination."

"Nor I. It wasn't imagination. It was genuine emotion which made him write them. He has loved some woman before he loved me."

"Katherine, you are a goose!"

"I suppose so, from your standpoint. But mine is different. I believe in just one love, and no more. I think that is what won me to Rosselyn—faith in his singleness and purity. I am an awfully jealous woman, Laura. I should not dare to marry a man whom I suspected of having harboured another passion."

"That means that you will throw over Rosselyn, who, whatever he may have done in the past, is now your bond slave, and marry David Grosvenor, who thinks no more of a new love than of a new pair of gloves."

"I have never thought of such a thing as marrying David Grosvenor."

"Of course you have not. You never see but one move ahead. I advise you, if you care about constancy, not to try him."

"I don't think I do care about constancy, or anything else, to-night."

"So I see. Don't care is a dangerous platform for a girl with two strings to her bow."

"You know quite well that if Mr. Grosvenor is courting any one it is you, Laura, and what you say is simple nonsense."

"Mr. Grosvenor courting me? I wish he was. He is an admirable parti. But I am too shrewd and fickle and unfeeling—too much like himself. It is you, my dear, whom the men all run after. You are so transparent and confiding. I hope none of them will break your heart. Good-night now; Uncle Erskine is calling me."

Katherine Pennell had good common sense, with all her weakness about first love. She continued her walk when she was alone, thinking over the evening's events. What she wanted was the world-old want—happiness. She firmly believed that it was to be found in marriage—if the marriage was only a true one, like hers with Charles Rosselyn as she had pictured it before these miserable songs came to light. It was a very simple matter, she knew, for a young man to have written love songs in his college days. But Rosselyn had told her so much about those days, of their studious abstraction, and devotion to a pursuit. It had seemed, he told her, as if his happiness in knowing and loving her was doubled by his ignorance of other women, by the fact that all the ardour of his nature was centred upon one.

This was what he had told her. But it was not the truth. How much else, then, had he told her which was also false?

At this juncture her eyes fell upon the portfolio which Mr. Grosvenor had neglected to carry home with him. She brought a candle, her hand trembling with excitement, and began to overlook the contents. She was prepared for the worst, but hardly for what met her eye.

The portfolio contained many leaves from an old diary, written in Charles Rosselyn's hand, and folded in letter shape, as though they might at some time have been enclosed in letters for some one's perusal.

Katherine stood holding them open before her, towards the candle. She did not see the contents clearly. But words swam before her eyes—words and phrases which seemed almost the duplicates of what had been addressed to her, and which she had fed upon and treasured as the very aroma of love.

"His sin has found him out," she murmured, passionately.

At this moment a light step suddenly stopped at the extreme end of the room, and David Grosvenor stood still, with an exultant fire in his eyes, to study the tableau before him.

"I did not know she went quite so deep," he murmured. "Farbien! how it improves her."

"Miss Pennell," he said, aloud, to make known his presence, "I beg your pardon. I did not mean to leave that portfolio here, knowing your feelings and the nature of its contents."

He spoke very penitently.

But she turned towards him with the disdain of an indignant young Diana.

"Pray do not make any apologies."

"You may wither me with the keenest sarcasm you choose," he returned, hotly, "but you cannot alter the fact that I would put myself to torture rather than cause you pain."

"Pain!" she repeated, contemptuously, with a slight, involuntary shiver; "why, according to your view, I am to be congratulated, having discovered that love is not trustworthy after all. We do not congratulate people in vain."

"My dear Miss Pennell, will it offend you if I say that the most unsubstantial foundation love was ever built on is the notion of its exclusiveness? Every one has, or will have, several fancies. I should not want a woman's first love if she were to be my wife."

"What degree, pray, should you require in her affections?" Katherine asked, with boundless contempt.

"I will tell you."

He stood before her, commanding her eyes with his, and leaving no doubt of his meaning in her mind.

"I should prefer the heart of an ardent and sensitive woman caught in its rebound."

"I hope you may not be denied so reasonable a desire," Katherine said, with curling lips.

"Katherine, I hope I may not. I have some reason to believe that I shall not. Is my hope presumption?"

"Everything you say and do is presumption," she flashed back, angrily.

And, shutting the portfolio, she pushed it toward him.

"Bringing this here was part of your presumption. Be kind enough to take it away."

Mr. Grosvenor bowed in silence at the command. The portfolio had done its errand.

He lifted it, adding not a word to efface those last spoken, and went away with a dreamy impression of Katherine roused into a tragic dignity which became her wondrously, standing erect, quivering, tempestuous, and more beautiful than he had ever beheld her before.

There were invitations issued for a summer party at the Pennells' the following week.

Katherine lent herself to the preparations with unusual animation.

She had been enabled to avoid an interview with Mr. Grosvenor since the scene over the portfolio.

As the guests began to assemble she looked for him with some coquettish curiosity. It was very late however before he arrived. She was dancing a quadrille. He came to her and begged for the following redowa.

"What delicious music," he said, as they whirled to the measure of the band.

"Yes."

"Promise me that you will not stop until we have been three times around the room, and I will tell you something."

"Very well."

"You promise?"

"Yes."

"If you look straight before you you will see Rosselyn."

Katherine looked, in sheer amazement, straight before her.

She was almost ready to think it was her lover's wrath instead of himself who stood with impatient eyes fixed upon her.

"Remember your promise," said Grosvenor, slightly tightening his clasp about her waist.

Katherine remembered it. She remembered the love-songs, too, and the leaves from the journal. She shut her lips tight, smiled, bowed, and then waltzed away.

Rosselyn stood still, rather grava, as she passed him the second time. When she went by again he walked away.

"Take my arm, and let me show you the illumination," said Grosvenor, as they stopped.

She yielded mechanically, but they met Rosselyn in the doorway, and she held out her hand.

He did not relinquish it as they walked out upon the lawn.

"Three spoils company," cried Laura Bellair, and she took Mr. Grosvenor away.

"Katherine," said Rosselyn, as soon as they were alone, "what is it?"

His strength and calmness had a power over her that none beside had. She was impelled to tell the truth. But she would not, in spite of the impulse.

"What is what?" she asked, coldly.

"What has happened that you kept on dancing with Grosvenor for twelve minutes after you knew that I had come—after so long a parting?"

"He made me promise that I would not stop before he let me see that you had come."

He looked anxiously in her face.

"There is something more. What has changed you?"

"I don't know, unless it is my discoveries."

"What have you discovered?"

"That men are all about alike, as Laura says."

"What do you mean? Whom am I like? Am I like any one who is contemptible or untrusty?"

"I don't see much difference."

"On what points?"

"There is no use beating about the bush, Charles. I have believed that you were as different a man from David Grosvenor as could be made. I believed that your heart and word were true, and his false. I have found it all out, however."

"Well, Katherine, what have you found out?" he asked.

"I have found out that you have deceived me, that you have loved some other woman as ardently and earnestly as you have professed to love me, and it changes all my views."

"How did you make your discovery, Katherine? You will not condemn me unheard, will you?"

"It came through your own words. I have seen the songs—the diary which chronicled your passion and your disappointment."

He smiled a little in spite of himself.

"What if I could explain the existence of those tell-tale records?"

"I do not care for explanations. You have assured me that you had never spoken of love to any woman but me. If you would be false in one declaration you would in another."

"I have not been false," said Charles Rosselyn, a little angrily. "I could repeat my declaration, if I would, and it would be utter truth."

She stole a look at his lowering face.

"How could you explain the existence of this other love?"

"You do not want explanations."

She was silent a minute.

"Yes, I do," she said, very softly.

"Ah, Katherine, what a thunder-cloud you have made of a vapour-breath. I will bring you the diary and the songs to-morrow, and we will look them over. They were written for one of my sister's novels; she has published two or three, you are aware. And she got me to do this filling in, for one, in order to give especial individuality to one character. But, after all my trouble, she did not like my efforts, and they have remained unused, until you saw fit to turn them into evidence against me."

"I don't believe I should have done so but for Mr. Grosvenor."

"So I thought. I will confess that I hurried home for fear David Grosvenor would somehow do me harm."

"You need not fear, Charles."

"No—not now. While I am with you."

"Do not leave me again!"

"I shall not, darling—not even for that 'other love' of whom you have been—"

"Jealous."

The lights from the lanterns burned in the fragrant night air, and the music played faster and sweeter and the hours wore away. The guests danced and supped and danced again, and a few found time to remark that Katherine and Laura Bellair, Charles Rosselyn and David Grosvenor, were nowhere visible till the evening was nigh spent.

Katherine's fair face was calm as ever when they at length appeared, but Rosselyn's wore a look of happy relief.

The two couples took their places opposite in a quadrille.

"Tell the band to conclude with the wedding march," said Grosvenor.

"For your benefit?" Katherine inquired.

"Laura and I will follow your lead," he replied, with significance, drawing Miss Bellair's hand into his arm.

The four looked into one another's faces, and went to get their cream while the band played the march.

"Isn't it premature?" some one inquired.

"We will redeem its promise before the end of the summer," replied Mr. Grosvenor.

And so they did.

W. H. P.



[THE LATE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.]

BISHOP WILBERFORCE.

THE English Established Church, English society, and in a certain sense the English nation have sustained a serious loss in the sudden and shocking death of the Bishop of Winchester. It is our purpose here to say a few words in regard to the man and his life and also in regard to the Anglican prelate.

Samuel Wilberforce was born September 7th, 1805, and was the third son of William Wilberforce the celebrated philanthropist. His father held a prominent position among the politicians of the day; he was a moderate Tory, and was the intimate friend of Pitt. His efforts towards the abolition of the slave trade will render his name immortal. But most of all he was conspicuous as a religious leader among what was called the Clapham Sect, a sort of Puritan society whose principles were of a very rigid order, much resembling those now professed by the Plymouth Brethren. He wrote a book which attained immense popularity in its day and is still, we think, to be found in the libraries of sympathizers. We mention this the more especially because it furnishes a curious illustration of the curious rebound of opinions in families. The son of a Tory becomes an extreme Radical; the son of a strict person turns out something of a sinner; or as in this case the son of an Evangelical father becomes eminent as an eloquent Puseyite or even Ritualistic prelate. The late Bishop was educated first by a private tutor, and subsequently at Oriel College, Oxford, where he graduated as Bachelor in 1826, proceeded M.A. in 1829, and was created D.D. in 1845. His academic attainments were of the usual and required sort; but he was a diligent clergyman, an eloquent preacher, an accomplished debater, a courtly man in society rather than an erudite man, and all his speeches and writings are brilliant rather than profound. Certainly in regard to temporal promotion he was one of the most successful men in the Church: that Church where many fat livings are competed for, or some-

times openly bought and sold. He was ordained Curate of Checkendon, Oxfordshire, and held in succession the Rectory of Brightstone, the Archdeaconry of Surrey, the Rectory of Alverstoke, a Canonry of Winchester, a Chaplaincy to the late Prince Albert, and the Deanery of Westminster. He was consecrated Bishop of Oxford in 1845, and, as such, was Chancellor of the Order of the Garter, and by special appointment Lord High Almoner. In 1869 he was translated to the See of Winchester on the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Sumner; the latter prelate, we may add, still surviving. He was a member of several Societies, was an Honorary Chaplain to the Royal Academy, and a trustee of the British Museum. His writings, if we except his biography of his father and his History of the American Episcopal Church, consisted for the most part of the usual professional work, of Sermons and Charges.

Bishop Wilberforce was eminent as an orator. By nature he was extremely courtly, gracious, and urbane, but he was exceedingly dogmatic, intense in his least and most accidental opinion, and combative in the maintenance of it. A man has a full right to his own opinion, and to its maintenance and lawful propagation, but he ought to grant the same right to others, in other words to practise a general toleration. This most of all becomes men in authority; but this men set in authority have not always remembered. The ecclesiastical mind is necessarily narrow; and the best of men have been led into unkind or even wrong actions under the injurious influence of a prescribed (and by implication infallible) orthodoxy. Bishop Warburton was once asked by Lord Sandwich to explain the nature of the Orthodox Faith. The estimable bishop was candid as well as witty. "Orthodoxy," he replied, "is my doxy and heterodoxy is other people's doxy" (doxa meaning an opinion, notion, doctrine). No man in his senses can correctly elevate his own opinion, or that of any number of men, however ancient or excellent, into actual and infallible Truth. The spread of Liberalism,

whether in politics or in other affairs, has always been opposed by the clerical order. The late Bishop was sincere, honest, zealous, but, like most of his order, not always tolerant. As a speaker he was peculiarly brilliant, excelling alike in sarcasm, in pathos, or in denunciation. Two instances may be cited: his reply to Lord Westbury when that able lawyer wisely desired the clergy to stick to their proper functions, as concerning the "Essays and Reviews"; and his fine flow of eloquence in defence of the Irish Church in the memorable debates of 1868. He shone best, however, as a man in society. He was the courtly Chesterfield of the Bench. He was cosmopolitan in his conversation, and his witty and humorous sayings have been frequently noted. He used to talk as gaily and as glibly about garden parties, dances and croquet matches as about the sin of Nonconformity or the dignity of the Episcopal order. He was a great favourite in the Belgravian quarter. Nor less was he popular among the poor. As parish priest he was ever attentive to their wants and needs; in fact, there belonged to him some inheritance of philanthropy. Concerning his professional career we can say but little. If Dr. Pusey and Dr. Newman were the heads of the Puseyite movement, we might almost call Bishop Wilberforce its tongue. He carried it forth from Oxford seclusion into the outer world, and succeeded in making it fashionable among the aristocracy. There are only two poles logically possible in philosophical or religious opinion: authority, namely, and individual investigation, or private judgment. All else is illogical, and demonstrably absurd. All the Bishop's brothers carried the principle fairly out, and went naturally over to the only Church that urges an infallible claim—to the Popish. But the Bishop remained where he was. He secured the devoted admiration of the ecclesiastical section he served so zealously; he secured the esteem and admiration of some of the most brilliant men and some of the most fashionable ladies; and best—unquestionably best of all—he secured the pure affection of the poor, for whose temporal good he had often eloquently appealed and generously given.

We need not dwell at length upon his melancholy end, familiar already to us all. He was on a visit to beloved friends, among whom were Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone, in the charming county of Surrey when the terrible accident ensued that almost instantly took away his life. This occurred Saturday, July 19. He was buried at Lavington, in the churchyard of the edifice reared with faithful care by Dr. Newman (now the eminent Roman clergyman), and there he sleeps his latest sleep among his old parishioners. The aristocratic and the clerical order were well represented at the funeral; but one omission seemed at least singular. The Prince of Wales was not present, and was not represented, at the burial of his father's eminent chaplain. Indeed, that day was devoted to a garden party, which, we may presume might readily have been deferred.

The value of the See of Winchester, we may add, is now 7,000*l.* annually; a sum being also devoted to the retired prelate.

At the funeral, which took place on Friday, July 25th, the Bishop of Chichester held a most honourable post in the obsequies of his departed friend. On the following Sunday, at the Cathedral, Dean Hook, who was at school at Winchester with the late Bishop, preached an eloquent and forcible sermon, and alluded to the loss sustained by the Church by the death of Samuel Wilberforce. The Dean said the late Bishop was a personal friend of his, beloved and honoured. To the illustrious prelate now deceased (the Dean observed) the diocese was, next to its own bishop, most deeply indebted for the assistance he rendered when the greater part of this noble Cathedral lay in ruins. Overwhelmed with business in his own diocese, and labouring for the Church at large—for every one called on him for assistance—he laid aside every other demand that he might plead for the Cathedral of the county in which he had taken up his abode. And how eloquent his pleading was! with what energy did he pour forth the tones of his eloquent voice, and entreat the children of God for the love of their Heavenly Father to come to the Lord's help for the rebuilding of the Father's House! How did he call upon us to unite in one energetic prayer which soon ended in a voice of grateful thanksgiving when the Cathedral was reopened, and good Archbishop Longley being silenced by domestic grief was unable to speak as he intended, and the then Bishop of Oxford, without a moment's hesitation urged all to contribute, and by such contributions to show that their religion was "pure and undefiled." In private as in public life those who knew him knew how pure and spotless the religion of this great prelate was. Those who were permitted to follow him into the retreat of domestic life saw wherever they moved the purity of the religion by which he was drawn near to his Saviour and his God. To his family how justly was he endeared; and they have witnessed to his tenderness as

a husband by refusing public honours proffered by a grateful Church and country, that even in death he might not be separated from her who during the comparatively short period of their domestic union was one with him in heart as well as in principle. To his acquaintances—many in number—he was endeared by the gentleness of his temper and the sincerity of his manner. To his numerous friends—few persons more completely mastered the art of turning acquaintances into friends—he was attracted by the ardour, the sincerity, and the steadiness of his attachments. In the application of his general knowledge to the characters of men and events of life he possessed that rare and happy union of correctness and liberality which is the surest criterion of a mind vigorous from nature, comprehensive from reflection, and rational from principle. In the discharge of his duties first as a curate and parish priest, and then as a bishop, he was deservedly celebrated for the soundness of his conversation was at once agreeable and instructive from the quickness and vivacity of his conception, the acuteness and accuracy of his reasoning, and the perspicuity, the exactness, and the elegance of his diction. His patriotism and loyalty to the Church were neither warped by prejudice nor tainted by faction. And his memory will be long revered by the unfortunate he was accustomed to assist and the indigent whom he was ever ready to relieve. The Venerable Dean, while thus alluding to his departed friend, was deeply affected, and his feelings communicated emotion to the congregation. At the conclusion the Dead March from "Saul" was played by the organist.

LADY CHETWYND'S SPECTRE.

CHAPTER LIX.

As Fiffine had remarked to young Lady Chetwynd Lady Diana Northwick was in one of her "lonely moods" upon this evening in which her ladyship had yielded to the solicitations of her privileged maid, and consented to see Bernice.

Denying herself to visitors, Lady Diana had shut herself up in her boudoir and was lost in thought.

There came a sound of footsteps in the corridor. They halted and a light knock was sounded upon the door.

Her ladyship, thus roused from her reverie, gave the summons to enter.

The door opened and Fiffine came in, followed by the young Marchioness of Chetwynd.

"I have brought the young lady, Miss Gwyn, my lady," said the Frenchwoman. "Her ladyship is come to see about the post of companion, if you please, my lady."

Lady Diana instinctively arose and greeted Bernice politely, yet with perceptible surprise. The girl's beauty and air of high breeding strangely impressed her.

She thought that she had never seen a beauty so refined, so glowing, so tropical and so tender as this that shone in the clear, olive cheeks, low, broad forehead, floating black hair, and brown eyes, with "looks like birds flying straightway to the light."

She saw at once that Bernice was a lady to her heart's core, and she courteously begged her to be seated near the fire.

Fiffine went into the dressing-room adjoining and there busied herself, leaving her former mistress and present mistress to their negotiations.

These negotiations were brief. Lady Diana felt drawn to Bernice strangely at the outset. She questioned Lady Chetwynd concerning her antecedents, but Bernice was reticent. She said simply that she was an orphan, in reduced circumstances, and compelled to earn her own support. She had no references to give, no credentials whatever, unless Fiffine's testimony in her favour would be considered of value.

There was no servility in Bernice's manner. She spoke as one lady speaks to another, as equal addresses equal, yet with a deference and respect and courtesy that were infinitely charming.

Lady Diana, charmed with the demeanour of the marchioness, resolved to engage her at once as her companion, and having intimated that intention to Bernice added:

"I live alone in this house with my servants and an elderly friend, a poor and titled lady whom I esteem. Your salary will be a hundred pounds a year, and Fiffine may assist you at your toilets. Is this satisfactory?"

"Oh, madam, oh, Lady Diana!" breathed Bernice, all aglow with delight. "Then I am to stay with you! May I stay to-night?"

She raised her big brown eyes in wistful appeal. Something in that look, or in the eyes themselves, went straight to Lady Diana's heart. With a singular and unwonted impulsiveness the lady drew Bernice to her breast and kissed her, murmuring:

"My dear child, you shall have a home henceforth with me. Your sorrows are all over. Your eyes are like sweet eyes that I have loved, eyes which were dead many years ago, and because of the strange resemblance I shall love you—even if for no other reason. You must feel that I am your friend."

Bernice experienced a strange and sweet content. She loved Lady Diana already with all the impulsiveness of a long-starved young heart. She clung to her with passionate tenderness, and Lady Diana's tears dropped upon her lovely face.

"A strange meeting," said Lady Diana, trying to smile. "I am not myself to-night. Something about you, Miss Gwyn, agitates me strangely. You are excited too, I see. Fiffine tells me that you have been ill, and this excitement is not good for you. Fiffine shall show you to your room."

She touched a little silver bell on the table.

Fiffine came in from the dressing-room.

"Fiffine," said Lady Diana, "Miss Gwyn will remain as my companion. You can show her to her room—the rose-room, opposite my dressing-room."

Bernice said good-night gracefully and retired with Fiffine.

Lady Diana on the following evening was sitting in an easy-chair with the last new book from Mudie's when a visitor was announced—Mr. Tempest.

He bowed his stately head low as he returned Lady Diana's greetings, and took possession of a seat which her ladyship indicated to him.

"My call upon you this evening," said the explorer, "is perhaps the last I shall make upon you, and I am indeed fortunate in finding you alone. I am thinking of going back to Tartary, and I desire to thank you for your kindness and courtesy to me during my stay in town. I shall ever remember you with kindness, Lady Diana, and I hope that your marriage with Lord Tentamour may be the crowning glory and joy of your life."

Lady Diana's snow-white face flushed carnine.

"You are strangely mistaken, Mr. Tempest," she exclaimed. "I do not contemplate a marriage with Lord Tentamour."

"But many have told me that you were engaged to marry Tentamour, Lady Diana."

"As you have lived so long in Tartary, Mr. Tempest, you may be excused for believing popular rumour. To say truth, I was engaged to marry Tentamour," said Lady Diana, more frankly, "but I have discovered that we are not suited to each other, and have given back to Tentamour his freedom. I accepted Lord Tentamour's devotion, but it was not because I loved him, but because I was all alone in the world and had none other to care for me. I knew him when I was but a school-girl. I loved him then. But I married Sir Rupert Northwick at my mother's command, and I strove to forget Tentamour. I did my duty to my husband, whom I did not love. I never failed to respect and honour him, thank Heaven! But it was Lord Tentamour who wrecked my life and the life of my husband. Sir Rupert never suspected that my mother was deeply in debt and that she forced me to marry him, and that I was sold to him just as truly as the Circassian girl in the Turkish slave market is sold to the highest bidder. He never—never knew all that, and yet—"

"And yet, Lady Diana?"

"I had been married years when Tentamour came to see me. We had not met before since my marriage. He was handsome, noble. At sight of him my school-girl love for him revived. He reproached me for having married Sir Rupert and proved untrue to my vows to him. He said that Sir Rupert was richer than he, and I had sold myself to the highest bidder. And then, stung to the very soul, I confessed to him that I still loved him, that I hated my husband, that I had married Sir Rupert for his wealth and position, and that I was half mad with misery. Oh, Heaven! it was all true! I cannot tell you, Mr. Tempest, all that was said by Tentamour or myself in our despair. But, arousing at last to a sense of my duty, I sent him away, telling him that he was not to come again to my house, that I should remain true to the husband to whom I had sold myself. He urged me to elope with him, and I rebuked him for the insult. He went away, and I went up to my rooms. And then I found that my husband had entered the house and overheard my conversation with Tentamour, and that he—my husband—was gone, and had taken with him our child. I deserved the punishment, but, oh! it was terrible. My little child! My poor baby! I have mourned for her from that day to this, as Rachel of old mourned, refusing to be comforted."

"And did you mourn for your husband also?"

"No, no—I never loved him. But I pitied him. I did indeed. He died soon after, his sister, Mrs. Molyneux, who is herself dead, told me. And the child—my little child—died also. I do not even know where she lies buried. I was weak and wicked in those early days, Mr. Tempest, for it is wicked to marry an honest man who gives a full heart of love

—to marry him, I say, for his money. I do not seek to excuse myself. I have no defence to offer, save that I was under my mother's control, and did as she bade me. I never saw Tentamour again for a year; he then began to visit me. After the news came of Sir Rupert's death I engaged myself to marry Tentamour as some reparation to him for the wrong I had done him. But after our betrothal we grew apart. He was jealous, and I grew cold and bitter. I think now that I never loved him. And at last, as an act of justice to him and myself, I refused to enter upon a second unloving marriage."

"I think you were right, Lady Diana. At any rate, it is better to wound Tentamour by refusing to marry him than to marry him not loving him. You are free now to marry whom you will. Lady Diana, you have been very gracious to me. Have I been merely the sport of a coquette, or have I deceived myself? The words I am about to speak to you have been told you by a hundred tongues, but the story is perhaps always new. I am a lonely, sorrowful, ill-bittered man, but I love you with all my heart and soul. Will you be my wife?"

Lady Diana started. Notwithstanding all her experience with lovers, the declaration took her by surprise. She flushed rosy red, then paled, and her eyes dropped shyly like a girl's as she whispered:

"Yes, Basil."

Tempest's face kindled with a light like that of the sun. He put his arm around her and drew her to him, and said:

"Diana, do you love me?"

"Yes," she whispered, softly and shyly, "I love you, Basil, better than my life."

"You have made your confession to me," said Tempest, "now hear mine. There is something similar in our histories. I too have been married—"

"You, Basil? Ah, yes, I heard you were a widower."

"And my wife married me for my money," said Tempest. "I overheard between her and her lover just such a conversation as you describe as having taken place between yourself and Lord Tentamour. I heard my wife say she hated me; I heard her say that she had married me for my money; I heard her lover propose an elopement. Ah, I think I was mad. I crept upstairs to my room and scratched a note to her, telling her I heard all. I went to the nursery—I seized my little child—I fled with her—"

"Oh, Heaven!"

"I took the child out of England and placed her in strange hands. Ah, I am sure now that I was half mad! And I went to Tartary, and have remained there ever since. I returned this year to seek my daughter, but found her dead. I saw you—loved you—and won your love. Diana, my real name is not Basil Tempest."

And he arose and stood before her grand and commanding, noble and kingly.

"My name is Sir Rupert Northwick!"

There was a dead and awful silence.

Lady Diana cowered before him in an agony. She knew him now, but she had not before suspected his identity. She thought that he had won her love but to mock her, to revenge himself upon her, to throw her aside, and her soul nearly died within her.

With a faint shriek, a wail of utter despair, Lady Diana covered her face with her hands.

"Diana!" he called to her, softly.

She looked up.

He was looking at her with a smile of ineffable love and tenderness, with a great yearning in his black eyes, a great emotion on his swarthy features.

"Come to me, Diana," he said, yet more softly

"Come, darling, my precious wife—won't you at last! Come to our rightful home!"

He opened wide his arms.

With a great cry of joy Lady Diana sprang forward and was clasped to his heart.

Husband and wife were united at last.

CHAPTER LX.

SIR RUPERT NORTHWICK and Lady Diana were seated side by side upon a sofa half an hour later, nearly calm, but filled with a joy unspeakable, when Lord Chetwynd and Bisset, the detective officer, were ushered into the drawing-room.

"This is an unexpected surprise," cried the baronet, coming forward to meet Chetwynd, with a beaming face. "What brings you here so opportunely, my lord? But permit me to present you to my wife, Lady Diana Northwick."

Lord Chetwynd and Bisset looked their surprise, but the baronet bowed to her ladyship, who blushed like a girl.

"I have been masquerading," explained the baronet.

"My name is not Tempest, my lord. In consequence

of reasons which I once explained to your lordship, I changed my name and abandoned my country. But my wife has won me back to my proper place, and you will henceforth know me under my true name of Sir Rupert Northwick."

"It sounds like a romance," said Chetwynd. "I congratulate you, Sir Rupert and Lady Diana, upon your happiness."

"Lady Diana Northwick, Mr. Bisset," said Sir Rupert, courteously.

Her ladyship acknowledged the presentation with her usual grace.

"Our visit seems most inopportune," said Lord Chetwynd, apologetically. "And, indeed, I scarcely know why we are here. Mr. Bisset urged me to come here, promising to throw light upon the mystery of the Chetwynd spectre; but we will retire, and come at some more opportune period."

"By no means," said the baronet. "You must remain, my lord, although I confess I do not understand what light Mr. Bisset hopes to find here upon a mystery which certainly seems insoluble. But I have a confession, or revelation rather, to make to you, and Mr. Bisset may as well hear it. In consequence of a domestic misunderstanding I abandoned my home some fifteen or sixteen years ago, taking with me my only child. I took her aboard my yacht, and carried her away from England to the remote Island of St. Kilda, in the Hebridean group, and I left her there in the care of the good minister and his wife, intending to reclaim the child within five years."

Chetwynd uttered a quick exclamation, but Sir Rupert motioned him to silence, and continued:

"I never went back to St. Kilda. I can hardly account for my criminal negligence of my own child. I was always saying to myself 'I will go back next year,' but I never went. I thought her safe. I knew the minister and his wife would be good to her. They were gentle people and had no children of their own. The child thus abandoned by me grew into girlhood. You saw her, my lord; you loved her, and married her. She was known to you as Bernice Gwellan. Her true name was Diana Northwick."

Lady Diana and Lord Chetwynd were alike speechless.

"I offer no excuses for myself," said Sir Rupert, sorrowfully. "My poor little child! She is dead, Diana. Chetwynd brought her to England as his wife, but she died some two months afterward of a fever contracted in visiting the cottage of a sick tenant on the estate. She never knew of a father's or a mother's love, but she did know a husband's love, Diana, and her last days were happy."

Lady Diana, sobbing now as no one had ever seen her sob, held out her hand to Chetwynd. He grasped it.

At this juncture a double knock on the house door announced more visitors.

"We are holding a reception to-night, Diana," said Sir Rupert, smiling. "Who comes now?"

"Some guests whom I have taken the liberty to invite to this house," said Bisset, calmly. "And here they are."

The door opened and the footman announced Miss Monk and Mr. Monk.

Sylvia Monk came in leaning on her brother's arm. She wore a white opera cloak over a long robe of light silk.

She had been to the opera, and had stopped at Lady Diana's with her brother on her way home.

She advanced to Lady Di with sinuous, undulating movement, and held out her hand.

"I received your note, Lady Diana," she said, in her soft, sibilant tones, "asking me to step in with Gilbert on my way home from the opera. You are not having a party, I think?"

She turned her head, recognizing and bowing to Tempest, Lord Chetwynd and Bisset.

Quitting Monk's arm, she clung to that of Chetwynd with an air of proprietorship.

"I have no party, Miss Monk," said Lady Diana, "but a little reunion I may perhaps call it. Permit me to introduce to you, in the gentleman you have known as Mr. Tempest, my own husband, whom I have for many years believed to be dead—Sir Rupert Northwick."

Miss Monk and Gilbert tendered their congratulations. They believed that they had been invited to witness the installation of Sir Rupert Northwick, whom they had known as Tempest, in his rightful dignities.

"We have made a singular discovery, Sylvia," said Lord Chetwynd. "Bernice is the daughter of Sir Rupert and Lady Diana Northwick."

Monk uttered a low, half-smothered curse.

This was the secret out of which he had hoped to win a fortune. During his brief stay in the house of Scotsby and Newman he had discovered that the youthful heiress of Sir Rupert Northwick had been carried away from her home by her own father, and

that Lady Diana had offered an immense reward for the recovery of her child. He had meant to claim that reward when he rescued Bernice from her coffin. Later, the idea had come to him to marry Bernice, and make himself master of the whole immense Northwick property, which, at the death of Sir Rupert and Lady Diana, must go to Bernice.

"Poor Bernice!" sighed Miss Monk. "It caused her many sorrowful hours that she did not know her parentage. The mystery darkened her life."

"Our conversation seems taking a gloomy turn," said Mr. Bisset. "This occasion is a joyful one, and I venture to suggest that we have a little music before we separate. Lady Diana, will you not order your companion—I suppose you have a companion—in to play for us?"

Lady Diana bowed assent and requested Mr. Bisset to ring the bell.

He skipped to the bell rope and pulled it. Then he skipped to the door and gave the order to the footman, in a whisper.

He waited at the door until he heard the rustling of silken garments on the stairs.

Then he opened the door.

Young Lady Chetwynd was approaching the door of the drawing-room.

Bisset gravely offered the young lady his arm, saying that Lady Diana desired him to conduct her into her presence, and he conducted her into the room and under the full blaze of the chandelier.

Then he stepped back and cried out, in a ringing voice:

"Ladies and gentlemen, allow me to present to you Lady Chetwynd's Spectre."

For an instant all was still as death. Bernice's brain reeled. She seemed blind. An awful horror seized upon her.

Her wild, brown eyes looked in wild appeal from one white, scared face to another, and then settled in an agony of beseeching upon that of Lord Chetwynd. She knew him. She felt at that supreme moment how she loved him.

She threw up her arms, crying out:

"Oh, Roy, Roy, save me!"

Chetwynd recognized her as the spectre of Chetwynd Park. And despite the fact that he had seen her buried a slow conviction began to dawn upon him that she was in truth his living Bernice.

"My lord," said Bisset, "I have done the work you set me to do. I have discovered the mystery of Lady Chetwynd's spectre. You have been the victim of a diabolical conspiracy between these Monks and the Hindoo woman, Ragee. Lady Chetwynd did not die, but was buried in a trance brought on by a diabolical Indian drug administered to her by Sylvia Monk, I presume. Gilbert Monk rescued Lady Chetwynd, and meant to marry her. She has escaped all her perils—she stands before you, the wife you loved, the wife you have so bitterly mourned."

Again Bernice looked to Chetwynd in wild appeal.

And now, as if galvanised, he started from his frozen stupor, bounded forward, and took her in his arms, straining her to his breast!

Gilbert and Sylvia Monk slunk in silence from the house.

Bisset tranquilly followed them. Bernice told her marvellous story again and again. Lord Chetwynd told her how he had mourned for her, and how she had brought back the light and glow and warmth to his life.

And Lady Diana and Sir Rupert told their story and claimed their daughter, and the night was bristling with joy and gladness such as is seldom known to humanity.

We need not linger upon the events that followed.

Lady Chetwynd returned to Chetwynd Park, and her faithful Fifi accompanied her as confidential attendant at a quadrupled salary.

Monsieur and Madame Bongateau found their business flourish so rapidly under the patronage of Lady Chetwynd and Lady Diana Northwick that they were obliged to remove to Regent Street, and their shop there enjoys a deserved renown.

The Monks transferred themselves withold Ragee to the Continent, and some three months later Sylvia perished miserably. She had recourse to a soothing draught in a fit of weakness produced by passion and by some mistake took instead of the draught a corrosive poison. She died in horrible agony, the fate being meted out to her which she would have measured to Bernice.

Ragee returned to India, broken-hearted at the death of her mistress. Gilbert Monk still lives, a wanderer on the face of the earth, getting his living by his wits.

Bisset received a princely reward for his services, and is fond of talking to his intimates of the mystery of Lady Chetwynd's spectre. He is a welcome guest at Chetwynd Park or Northwick Place in

Surrey, and two happier homes than these two cannot be found upon this earth.

After the storm has come the glorious sunshine that will last while life endures!

[THE END.]

HER MAJESTY'S STATE COACH.

THIS carriage, the most superb vehicle ever built, was designed, by Sir William Chambers, executed under his directions, and finished in the year 1761.

The paintings, which were executed by Cipriani, are as follows:

The front panel, Britannia seated on a throne holding in her hand a staff of Liberty, attended by Religion, Justice, Wisdom, Valour, Fortitude, Commerce, Plenty and Victory, presenting her with a garland of laurel; in the background, a view of St. Paul's and the River Thames.

The right door, Industry and Ingenuity giving a cornucopia to the Genius of England.

The panels on each side of the right door, History recording the reports of Fame, and Peace burning the implements of War.

The back panel, Neptune and Amphitrite, issuing from their palace in a triumphal car, drawn by sea-horses, attended by the Winds, Rivers, Tritons, Naiads, etc., bringing the tribute of the world to the British shore.

Upper part of back panel is the Royal Arms, beautifully ornamented with the order of St. George, the rose, shamrock and thistle entwined.

The left door, Mars, Minerva and Mercury supporting the Imperial crown of Great Britain.

The panels on each side of left door, the Liberal Arts and Sciences protected.

The front and four quarter-panels over the paintings are plate glass.

The whole of the carriage and body is richly ornamented with laurel and carved work, beautifully gilt. The length is 24 feet; width, 8 feet 3 inches; height, 12 feet; length of pole, 12 feet 4 inches; weight, 4 tons.

The carriage and body of the coach is composed as follows:

The figures of four large Tritons support the body by four braces covered with red morocco leather, and ornamented with gilt buckles.

The two figures placed in front of the carriage bear the driver, and are represented in the action of drawing by cables extending round their shoulders and the cranes, and sounding shells to announce the approach of the monarch of the ocean; and those at the back carry the imperial fasces, topped with tridents.

The driver's footboard is a large scallop shell, ornamented with bunches of reeds and other marine plants.

The pole represents a bundle of lances; the splinter-bar is composed of a rich moulding, issuing from beneath a voluted shell, and each end terminating in the head of a dolphin; and the wheels are imitated from those of an ancient triumphal chariot.

The body of the coach is composed of eight palm trees, which, branching out at the top, sustain the roof; and four angular trees are loaded with trophies allusive to the victories obtained by Great Britain in war, supported by four lions' heads.

On the centre of the roof stand three boys, representing the genii of England, Scotland and Ireland, supporting the imperial crown of Great Britain, and holding in their hands the sceptre, sword of state and ensigns of knighthood; their bodies are adorned with festoons of laurel, which fall from thence toward the four corners.

The inside of the body is lined with rich scarlet embossed velvet, superbly laced and embroidered with gold, as follows:

In the centre of the roof is the star, encircled by the collar of the Order of the Garter, and surmounted by the imperial crown of Great Britain; pendant, the George and Dragon; in the corners the rose, shamrock and thistle entwined.

The hind lounge is ornamented with the badge of the Order of St. Michael and St. George; and on the front the badge of the Guelph and Bath, ornamented with the rose, shamrock and thistle. The hind seat-fall has the badge of St. Andrew, and on the front the badge of St. Patrick, adorned with rose, shamrock, thistle and oak leaf. The hammercloth of the same costly materials.

The harness, for eight horses, is made of red morocco leather, and decorated with blue ribbons, the Royal Arms and other ornaments, richly gilt; and it is used when Her Majesty goes in state, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, and is kept in the Royal Mews, Piccadilly.

A NEW CHARM.—A few days ago, while a well-known Hawick manufacturer was walking in the railway station of a cathedral town in Northumber-

land, waiting the despatch of a train for the north, the idea struck him that he would whistle the favourite air of "Teribus," to see whether it would attract the attention of any one in the crowded station. He had not whistled long when he was joined first by one, then others, till he was surrounded by four parties, all residents of the town, and natives of Hawick, who, on hearing their native air, had run to see who was the performer. Of course there was a very cordial greeting and a wotting of the whistle.

FACETIÆ.

It is now claimed that the architect of the great Wall of China was a woman. A woman would do anything to keep men off of course.

SCRIBBLE.

English Tourist (having arrived at Greenock on Sunday morning): "My man, what's your charge for rowing me across the Frith?"

Boatman: "Weel, sir, I was jist thinkin' I canna break the Sawbath day for no less than fifteen shull'n'!"—*Punch*.

Unconscious Bids.—Be careful how you go to sleep at an auction. A gentleman settled himself in a comfortable chair, and his senses soothed by the auctioneer's lullaby, soon dropped asleep. When his nap was over he left the place. The next day he was astounded at the receipt of a bill for several hundred pounds' worth of carpets and other things. The auctioneer had received his somnolent's nods for bids.

MAKE YOUR MASTER'S INTERESTS YOUR OWN.

First Flunkey: "Going to wait here long?"
Second Ditto: "No—we're off to a garden party, on business."

First Ditto: "Which one is it?"

Second Ditto: "Oh, the eldest, as usual."

First Ditto: "Any good, this time, do you think?"

Second Ditto: "Well, I don't know. We're a-trying precious 'ard."—*Punch*.

TWO VANITIES.

(Amateur vocalist and his wife, alone together after an evening party.)

"Did I look nice to-night, love?"

"Oh, no end. H'm! was I in good voice?"

"First-rate, love! Tell me, do you prefer me with a ribbon in my hair, or flowers?"

"Oh, either. Look here. Which style suits me best, do you think—the fervid passion of Santley or the thrilling tenderness of De Soria?"

"Oh, both. Don't you think a yellow ribbon with black lace," etc., etc., etc.—*Punch*.

INTERESTING.

Things a married man cannot help thinking:

That all the girls used to be in love with him.

That all the widows are now.

That if he were a widower he could marry again whenever he chose.

That all the other fellows are fools.

That he wouldn't introduce any fellow he knows to his sister or his daughter.

That his wife is a little jealous.

That she used to be a pretty girl.

That his mother could make good bread; that his wife cannot.

That he would not trust most women.

That if he could ever speculate he would make his fortune.

That he would enjoy a country life.

That his mother-in-law may be a fine old lady, but—

That smoking never hurt a man yet.

That with a little management the servants would always do well, and never give warning.

That his shirt buttons are grossly neglected.

That he is going to make his fortune some day.

That he despises old bachelors.

Things a married woman cannot help thinking:

That she was very pretty at sixteen.

That she had, or would have had, a great many offers.

That all her lady friends are five years older than they say they are.

That she has a very fine mind.

That if her husband had acted on her advice, he would be a rich man to-day.

That people think too much of the looks of that Miss—, who would not be called handsome, if she didn't make herself up.

That her mother-in-law is a very trying woman.

That her sister-in-law takes airs, and ought to be put down.

That her girls are prettier than Mrs. A.'s girls.

That she would like to know where her husband spends his evenings when he stays out.

That her eldest son takes after him.

That he is going to throw himself away on Miss Scraggs.

That Miss Scraggs set her cap for him, and did all the courting.

That her servant girls are the worst ever known.

That she has a good temper.

That she pities old maids.

MAIDEN MUSINGS.

A BLUE-EYED, dimpled and red-cheeked girl
On a green bank musing lay.

While dreamily watching the gossamer
clouds.

As they airily floated away.

All the day she had flitted about the house,

In and out, as a bird might do;

But all of the work of her nimble hands

Had been honest work and true.

In the gray of morn she had milked the

cows.

And had churned for the golden balls;

Then she plaited the rose and twined the

vines.

To grace the glaring walls:

But best of all, when the noon-tide heat

Stayed the ploughman, though singing

still—

She had stolen away, for a moment's chat,

In the shade, with young Farmer Will.

Yet now, at eve, she was watching the

clouds,

And sighing—"The morrow must be

Just the same as to-day; and the next—and

the next—

Just a struggle with sad poverty!

And when with lost years the charms, too,

are lost

Of a rounded form and fair face,

What laurels are found in a farmer's life

To requite me and fill their place?

"But if I were rich I would make my home

Where rank and fashion could meet.

I would quaff life's wine from a chalice of

gold;

Titled ladies and lords I would greet.

Bright, shimmering silks should enrobe my

form,

With laces both costly and rare.

And pearls should encircle my throat and

brow.

And diamonds should flash in my hair!

"I should never again, perchance, ride out,

Perched a-top of a billow of hay;

But in my own carriage, on cushions of

down,

With matched grays, be dashing away!

And a gallant lover should sue for my hand,

And pleasure life's moments should fill.

I should be so happy—but then, after all,

I suppose I should miss Farmer Will!"

• • • • •

The morrow woke, and the blithesome girl,

Refreshed by the sweet rest of night,

Took up the burden she was fain to lay

down

With a happy heart and light;

Her home is a cottage; she, drinks life's

wine.

From a spring just under the hill;

While her splendid lover, and titled lord,

Is brave, honest, true-hearted Will!

The gems for her brow are her labours of

love;

Her diamonds are children's dear eyes;

Her carriage—a wee one, and drawn by

hand—

Wherein, oft, a sweet baby lies!

Her steed is old Dobbin, with clumsy feet;

Her wealth is her own pure life,

That crowns the years of her heart's best-

beloved,

With the bliss of a faithful wife.

S. L. U.

FALSE PRIDE.—A lack of money is hard to bear in all cases; but the poverty which tries to conceal itself under a cloak of shabby gentility is the worst of all poverty. Contrast the hard-working mechanic who toils unremittently to keep the wolf from the door that wife and little ones may be neither cold nor hungry, and who, being not ashamed to acknowledge his hand-to-hand fight with poverty, has little else to trouble his mind—contrast him, we say, with the poor victim of shabby gentility, who would rather surrender his poor, empty, false existence than admit that he often suffers for the bare necessities of life while he and his show a "genteel" surface to the eyes of the

world, and say truly which life you would prefer. Never be ashamed to pass for just what you really are, and try to be as worthy as possible. Once establish yourself and your mode of life as what you truly are, and you are on solid ground. A man is already of consequence in the world when it is known that we can implicitly rely on him—that when he says he knows a thing he knows it, and when he says he will do a thing he will do it. Such a reputation will give a man more real enjoyment, and is of far greater value to him, than all the results which display and pretension can compass.

GEMS.

THERE is no trouble, however great, that has not in the course of its very greatness some drop of comfort; for the human heart, like a bee, will gather honey from poisonous blossoms.

As they who, for slight infirmity, take physic to repair their health do rather impair it, so they who for every trifle are eager to vindicate their character do rather weaken it.

Whoever has gone through much of life must remember that he has thrown away a great deal of useless uneasiness upon what was much worse in apprehension than in reality.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TREATMENT OF CHILBLAIN BY ELECTRICITY.—Dr. Santopadre makes known a means which he has employed with success for the treatment of chilblain—namely, electricity. He makes use of Galileo's electromagnetic apparatus, and of a current of middling intensity. The positive pole is placed in the neighbourhood of, and a little above, the inflamed spot, and the negative pole to the inflamed spot itself. The sitting lasts about ten or fifteen minutes, and is repeated if necessary the following day. Generally after the very first sitting the itching ceases and the pain is much abated. After the third or fourth sitting recovery is complete.

STATISTICS.

CONSUMPTION OF SUGAR.—A Parliamentary return, ordered on the motion of Mr. Crum-Ewing, states that in the year 1872 there were 15,505,999 cwt. of sugar of all sorts imported into the United Kingdom. The import of sugar from British possessions advanced from 5,132,967 cwt. in 1871 to 5,224,470 cwt. in 1872; but the import from foreign countries advanced from 8,634,499 cwt. in 1871 to no less than 10,281,528 cwt. in 1872. The import from the Spanish West India Islands rose from 1,430,738 cwt. in 1871 to 3,091,275 cwt. in 1872; from Brazil from 1,242,311 cwt. to 1,878,587 cwt.; from France from 1,948,138 cwt. to 2,238,811 cwt. The import from Germany declined from 1,152,179 cwt. in 1871 to 341,816 cwt. in 1872. The quantity entered for home consumption was 14,049,995 cwt. in 1871, and 14,306,159 cwt. in 1872. The average declared value of sugar in 1872, exclusive of duty, was 23s. 8d. per cwt. for British East India 26s. 8d. for British West India, 27s. 4d. for Mauritius, and 27s. 8d. for Spanish West India; this last being 8d. per cwt. higher than in 1871, Mauritius 2d. lower, but British West India 2s. higher, and British East India 3s. 3d. higher.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Princess Josephine, cousin to the Queen of Spain, has had her goods seized in Paris to satisfy her milliner's bill of 200 guineas.

THE new Lord Westbury is in a state of health which does not leave his friends without fears that he may not long enjoy his high honour.

THE cost of the public festivities to the Shah while in England amounted to quite 40,000*l.*, of which the State will be asked to pay 7,000*l.*, leaving the remainder to be paid by Her Majesty.

CHAMPAGNE is said to be increasing in price consequent upon colliers drinking such large quantities. A new song has been composed for the colliers; it is called "A Champagne Colley is my name."

HER MAJESTY, on the recommendation of Mr. Gladstone, has granted a pension of 100*l.* per annum to Professor Long, one of the founders of the London University, and for many years Professor of Latin at University College, in consideration of his eminent services to learning and literature.

HIS MAJESTY the Shah of Persia having expressed through Sir Henry Rawlinson his readiness to become a member of the Society of Arts, the council have great pleasure in announcing that they have (in accordance with the 74th bye-law) elected him an honorary member.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MARY.—Honestly, the writing is capable of great improvement. This, however, comes readily by practice.

H. MORRIS.—We cannot discuss (necessarily) the inner arrangements of any public company. It is wholly against all journalistic rule and precedent.

EVAN D.—A personal introduction is no doubt the orthodox rule. Still, if "all's fair in love and war," we must remind you that "faint heart never won fair lady."

VALE.—It is extremely doubtful whether he would be permitted to pursue any other calling while occupied as a Government official in the delivery of letters. We should say certainly not.

W. C. T.—At what period should lovers kiss each other first? No authority has laid down any law on that most delicate subject. We suppose it is left to natural inclination. Is not the question somewhat strange?

LESLIE A.—We repeat that we cannot undertake in any case to return rejected communications. See our notice, given regularly each week. Authors send therefore entirely at their own risk. We are unable to add anything to our notice.

M. S.—For dry pimples. 1. Sea bathing is a powerful remedy. Stimulants of all kinds should be avoided, and ripe fruit and vegetable should form a prominent part of the diet. Lemon water is the best beverage. To relieve the itching use brisk friction with a soft flesh brush, and use after such application a lotion formed by adding the juice of a lemon to three-quarters of a pint of water, with the addition of a tablespoonful of glycerine. But pustular pimples (those containing matter) require a fuller treatment. Which is it that you are concerned about?

X. Y. Z.—Colonel Favos Coronos was born at Constantinople in 1811. He served as an officer in the Greek artillery, and was on the staff of the French general during the Syrian expedition of 1860. Having been accused in 1861 of conspiring against the government of King Otto, he was imprisoned in the Citadel of Nauplia, from which he contrived to make his escape, and put himself at the head of an insurrection that broke out there the same year. He was wounded in a sortie against the royal troops in November, and, having been imprisoned in the fortress of Chalcis, was set at liberty after the flight of King Otto in 1862. For some time he was Minister of War, and was Commandant of the Greek National Guard, which post he resigned in 1869 in order to place himself at the head of the Cretan insurrection; an occasion when the descendants of the Three Hundred endeavoured manfully if unsuccessfully to throw off the degrading Turkish tyranny.

HETTY.—1. The following is Rundell's receipt for the manufacture of puff paste. Take a quarter of a peck of flour, rub into it 1 lb. of butter, and make a light paste with cold water just firm enough to work well; next lay it out about as thick as a crown piece; put a layer of butter all over it; sprinkle on a little flour, double it up and roll it out again; by repeating this with fresh layers of butter three or four times, or oftener, a very light paste will be formed. Bake it in a moderately quick oven. 2. Use a good tooth powder, and let any hollow teeth be carefully stopped. Take a lemon occasionally, with sugar, at bedtime. Also take: gum catechu 3 oz.; white sugar 5 oz.; orris powder 1 oz.; neroli 5 or 6 drops; make them into a paste with mucilage, and divide the mass into very small lozenges. One or two may be sucked at pleasure. 3. By cutting, but let a hairdresser perform the operation. You would also find the Henna pomade, which is specially adapted for that purpose, of material service. 4. Apply Gowland's lotion; or the following ointment will do equally well: Elder flower ointment 1 oz.; sulphate of zinc (levigated) 20 gr.; mix by trituration in a wedgewood mortar; or, better still, get a chemist to do it for you. To be applied night and morning.

JUVENILE.—(1.) To make blue fire: metallic antimony one part, sulphur two parts, nitre five parts. (2.) Light blue: sulphur sixteen parts, calcined alum twenty-three parts, chlorate of potassa sixty-one parts. (3.) Crimson fire—for boxes and stars: charcoal four and a quarter parts, sulphuret of antimony five and a half parts, chlorate of potassa seventeen and a quarter parts, sulphur eighteen parts, nitrate of strontia fifty-five parts. (4.) Green fire: metallic arsenic two parts, charcoal three parts, chlorate of potassa five parts, sulphur thirteen parts, nitrate of baryta seventy-seven parts. Very beautiful, particularly when burnt before a reflector. The ingredients in the above compounds are to be separately reduced to powder, and sifted through lawn, after which they should be kept in well-corked, wide-mouthed bottles until the time for mixing them for use. The

chlorate of potassa more especially must be separately treated and cautiously handled. The requisite quantity, of each of the ingredients being weighed out and placed on a clean sheet of paper, the whole is to be thoroughly but carefully mixed together with a light hand by means of a wooden knife. The compound is next lightly packed into small cups or pans for illuminations, or into small pill boxes for stars and trains, a little priming and quick match being lastly attached to each. The ingredients must not be too finely pulverized. The nitrate of strontia, alum, sulphate, carbonate of soda, etc., before being weighed require to be gently heated in an iron pan until they fall to powder. They should not be prepared long before they are required, and they should be stored in some very safe situation.

BERTRAM.—The Marquis of Lorne (John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland Campbell, called by courtesy Marquis of Lorne), eldest son of the Duke of Argyll, was born at Stafford House, London, in 1845. He was elected M.P. for Argyllshire in the Liberal interest in Feb. 1863, and in Dec. of the same year he became private secretary to his father at the India Office. He was educated at Eton, at the University of St. Andrews, and at the Trinity College, Cambridge. The chief event of his life was his marriage with the Princess Louise, March 21, 1871. The ceremony was performed in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, by the Bishop of London, assisted by the Bishops of Winchester, Oxford and Worcester. A work by Lord Lorne entitled "A Trip to the Tropics" was published in 1872. It was described as the best book of travels of the season.

A SUMMER FABLE.

A wilding Rose, half-blown, awoke one day,
Thrilled by the vernal stir of woods and streams,

Uncurled her innocent petals, white as May,
And burst her balmy sheath of virgin dreams,
As forth she looked in lovely wonderment;
Wide fields and woods, and far in purple space
The crystal arches of the morning bent.

Blue violets spangled thick her grassy floors,
Cool shadows curtained in her rustling halls,
And crying sunbeams thronged her leafy doors
Smote golden fire from all her daisy walls;
The far-off tinkle of a hidden rill
Made a faint chorus in the summer hush;
Between each long-drawn warble, shake and trill
The silver-clear soprano of the thrush.

A wanton Zephyr, loitering down the vales
In idle dalliance with green growing things,
Made merry shipwreck of the painted sails
Of drifting butterflies; then dropped his wings
Where, in her maiden chamber all alone,
The happy Rosebud, dreaming of the sun,
Put on her queenliest sweetest, fully blown,
And smoothed her silken vestments one by one.

Poised on her couch's jewelled rim, unseen,
The culprit breeze, on frolic mischief bent,
Stooped, and beneath her virgin snood of green,
His amorous soul in fragrant kisses spent;
As the unannounced blow of Winter gloves,
Kindled by young Aurora's kiss divine,
So, in swift ecstasy, the conscious Rose
Through all her whiteness blushed incarnadine.

But vagrant Zephyr spreads his fickle wings,
Cloyed with sweet dalliance in a hundred bowers,
In farther flight, for newer conquest brings
The ruffled spicery of unnumbered flowers,
Alas! no more in maiden whitened dress,
Still glows the Rose, shamed by her love's despair;
She hides the rankling thorn within her breast,
And wastes her sweetness on a thing of air!
E. A. B.

W. T. A., twenty, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady about his own age, who must be pretty, loving, and domesticated.

THOMAS, well educated, and a timber-merchant, desires to correspond with a sweet-tempered, good-looking young lady about sixteen.

MAUD, 5ft., light golden hair, dark brown eyes, fair complexion, and considered pretty. Respondent must be dark, good looking, and a midshipman.

MARGERY, seventeen, tall, blue eyes, brown hair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be medium height, light hair, fond of music and dancing, loving, and in a good position.

LAURA J., twenty, medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered rather good looking, is loving, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, loving, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

JULIAN T. N., twenty-one, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, light-brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and fond of home, and a mechanic. Respondent must be nineteen, tall, and affectionate.

ALICE, seventeen, fair, medium height, a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty, good looking, dark, and fond of home and children.

MARY M., twenty-one, tall, fair, blue eyes, quite a wealth of brown hair, and a good figure; would make a good wife. Respondent must be twenty-one, tall, and good looking.

HORACE, twenty-four, light hair and eyes, affectionate, possessing a good income, and fond of children. Respondent must be pretty, domesticated and good tempered.

ROSE, nineteen, 5ft. 3in., dark brown hair and eyes, rather dark complexion, desires to correspond with a young man, with dark, curly hair, dark complexion, and good looking; a midshipman preferred.

DAVID P., twenty-seven, rather tall, brown hair, dark-blue eyes, of a cheerful and loving disposition. Respon-

dant must be fair, affectionate, domesticated, and fond of music.

GARRY C., twenty-seven, fair, pretty, and domesticated, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman about her own age; a grocer preferred.

J. M. C., twenty, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, who must be thoroughly domesticated.

MARION G., eighteen, fair complexion, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

NELLIE C., eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, of an amiable disposition, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be rather tall, dark, good looking, loving, and fond of home.

W. H. B. would like to correspond with a young lady about twenty or twenty-one. She must be fairly educated, thoroughly domesticated, and have a moderate income.

JOHNIE, twenty-five, dark, medium height, and with good prospects, would like to correspond with a well-educated young lady about twenty, loving, and fond of the drama.

MARCY G., nineteen, medium height, fair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be a out twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, light hair, of an even temper, and must occupy a good position.

C. C. M., twenty-two, considered handsome, tall, fair, having good prospects. Respondent must be pretty, of a loving disposition, domesticated, and a tradesman's daughter.

YOUNG BUNTING, twenty-one, a seaman in the Royal Navy, fair, medium height, wishes to correspond with a young lady having dark hair, blue eyes, and must be loving and domesticated.

ANDREW, twenty-five, a foreign gentleman, tall, dark, handsome, affectionate, musical, and educated. Respondent must be tall, slender, fair, loving and domesticated, and having no objection to go abroad.

CHRISTOPHER M., twenty-four, fair complexion, dark-brown hair, gray eyes, of a loving disposition, and a mechanic. Respondent must be tall, about twenty-two, loving, and domesticated.

GRACE, twenty-two, dark complexion, brown hair and eyes, good tempered, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-five, in a good position, and fond of home.

EDWIN T., twenty, a mechanic, fair complexion, curly hair, 5ft. 3in., and of musical tastes, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, pretty, loving, domesticated, and musical.

BLANCHET L., of medium height, dark, and considered pretty, accomplished, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, good looking, and must possess a good income.

SELINA, twenty-three, medium height, fair complexion, considered pretty, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, and about twenty-five; a carpenter preferred.

ETHEL K., twenty, medium height, fair complexion, auburn hair, gray eyes, and is loving and domesticated. Respondent must be handsome and loving; a mechanic preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

LOUIE C. is responded to by—"Private," twenty, 5ft. 6in., dark, and has an income of 150l. per annum.

NELLY by—"Herbert L.," who thinks he is all that she requires.

EMILY H. by—"R. J. T.," tall, dark, and a clerk in a government office.

FOREIGN CLIMATE by—"Rhoda C.," dark, pretty, affectionate, and a domestic servant.

WILLIAM S. by—"Fanny E.," fair, amiable, pretty, and domesticated.

CHARLES C. by—"Maryann O.," a cook, nineteen, loving and domesticated.

MABEL G. by—"N. O. G.," who thinks he will suit her.

JOSEPH F. by—"Maria," tall, dark, loving, and domesticated.

LOUIE T. by—"Martha P.," housemaid, nineteen, fair complexion, loving, and domesticated.

ROSEBUD by—"Architect," twenty-three, tall, dark, considered good looking, very affectionate, and has an income of 200l. yearly.

CHARLIE CROSBY by—"Loving Annie," a cook, of medium height, thoroughly domesticated, and thinks she would suit him.

EDWARD by—"Lively Nelly," twenty-three, medium height, fair complexion, clear gray eyes, considered pretty, and thinks that she is all he requires.

KATE by—"G. H. W.," twenty-five, 5ft. 6in., good looking, in a good business, and could keep a wife comfortably.

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